BEYOND AFROPOLITAN & OTHER LABELS

On the Complexities of Dis-Othering as a Process

BEYOND AFROPOLITAN
& OTHER LABELS
On the Complexities of
Dis-Othering as a Process

CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS

CRITICAL SPACES

A Frank Introduction

BOZAR

This publication is intended as a reader for cultural stakeholders in Europe who are grappling with the serious challenge of diversifying state-funded cultural institutions in order to better serve the diverse populations of their constituencies, and in particular, the complex processes of decolonising cultural institutions. It acts as a platform for some of the critical voices involved in this initiative. It is also an honest account of a complicated project on a sensitive subject.

Three European institutions[1] in Austria, Belgium and Germany came together over the course of a small, two-year Creative Europe project to question, in particular, ways in which to engage with the African continent and its representation with Afrodescendant artists and communities. Inspired by the groundbreaking work of SAVVY Contemporary and its director Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung, the project attempted to follow Ndikung's conceptual proposal of "dis-othering as a method". This method calls for a self-reflection at the level of the institutions themselves, turning the mirror onto them, questioning their practices for generating diverse and inclusive programming, and detecting how they may in fact contribute to the construction and cultivation of otherness through (often unintended) strategies of commodification, cooption, and the paternalisation of the "Other", instead of diversifying at their core, at the level of personnel.

European societies, many with legacies of a colonial past, need to change their education, media and cultural sectors to reflect their history and multicultural population make-up and to help curb racism and discrimination, but change is slow. As Belinda Kazeem-Kaminski puts it:

"How does one think about Blackness in a country where colonialism is rarely discussed, kept out of schoolbooks, and out of what Gloria Wekker calls the 'cultural archive' where Black people are, as Araba-Evelyn Johnston-Arthur accurately puts it, 'caught up in a state of extreme visibility and extreme invisibility'? Which measures are necessary for proactively conjuring up the ghosts of colonialism? And which forms of artistic expression are able to grasp the grammar of suffering and violence against Black people without reproducing it?"[2]

BOZAR – which had for a number of years housed a Africa desk responsible for significantly opening up the institution to contemporary voices and new images from the continent and the diaspora – saw this collaboration as an opportunity to question a number of inter-related issues, including, among others: its labelling of programmes under an "Afropolitan" label, the desk's existence as a tool for "affirmative action" within BOZAR and its possible projected obsolescence, the responsibility for diversity within the institution, collaborations with Afrodescendant artists, and issues of internal staffing, etc.

After 25 years of engagement in opening Austrian society up to the world, Kulturen in Bewegung also embraced this project as a chance to revisit its strategy to that effect. The images their curatorial practices convey, their attempt to dismantle stereotypes, and the bridges they build – whether through performing arts, debates or festival events with artists representing non-European artistic canons – could now be questioned through a reconsideration of the institution's approaches, partnerships, staffing, and funding.

SAVVY Contemporary, which took on an artistic direction role in the project, was interested, as Jonas Tinius puts it, in engaging in "curatorial trouble-making" with national institutions, aware of the tensions rocking the cultural scenes of the three countries (such as, for example, the controversial re-opening of the Africa Museum in Belgium in late 2018, the Humboldt Forum's issue with curatorial diversity in Germany, and the election gains of the Austrian right), and advocating that real change could only be successful if it also came from within the institutions themselves.

To reinforce the project's work, three associate partners[3] in Belgium, the UK, and Poland also contributed a range of perspectives to this reflection.

Despite the partners' committed engagement, over the course of its two-year run (from late 2017 to the end of 2019), the project was subjected to the forces of the very practices it intended to investigate. Illustrating the complexity of the topic, and consequently justifying the fundamental long-term relevance of such a project, tensions arose at and towards BOZAR over exhibition prospects and the remuneration of artists and scientific contributors, with miscommunication, dialogue barriers, and mis-matched agendas eroding trust and the possibility of positive resolution. Looking back, the decolonisation context in the country at the time may have played a part in stakeholders' engagement. After a five-year renovation during which its record

of collaboration with Afrodescendant expertise and its treatment of colonial history and restitution were criticized, the re-opening of the Africa Museum generated increasingly fierce anti-institutional stances, already fed by a number of pre-existing issues. Different formats of reflection, other than public symposia, for example, may have been more conducive for rallying positions towards new paths of engagement in a safe discussion space. To some of the participating parties, the experience of this project may have felt like Olivier Marboeuf's definition of decolonising: "an act of being there and escaping from the toxic hospitality in which our presence is invited to hold itself".[4] And so the project's artistic director and several participants left the project, not enduring the inherent contradictions of this field, which the project attempted to reorient into a productive and transformative force in order to redress fraught social, political and economic relations.

The project became, in a way, an example of the double layers of agendas at work when decolonising institutions, sometimes crippling the enterprise. Marboeuf describes activists' need for double levels of agency during the phase of decolonising institutions because "to act within the institution's core is probably in vain in the absence of other soils to welcome the scenes of the future, catch our breath, regain strength, practice alliances with the living and the dead". Nevertheless, despite these tensions, and perhaps even because of them, and their necessity, issues come out in the open, interesting reflections are produced, and slow but lasting institutional changes are initiated.

The mapping research – *Mapping Diversities* – not only highlights the resistance of cultural institutions (within different cities in each of the three counties) to questioning the diversity of their staff at decision-making level, but also addresses the theoretical challenge of investigating diversity without recreating the markers of difference one wishes to denounce. The research also presents the varied national contexts of Austria, Belgium and Germany, which in part explain the results of this mapping (see Hunter, Ntakiyica & Tinius, and Introduction to Mapping Diversities in this publication).

The exhibition *Geographies of Imagination*, curated by SAVVY Contemporary and praised by the press, exposes "othering" practices in European societies and proposes ways of dis-engagement (Marchini). The *Let's Talk about Dis-Othering* discussion sessions with artists and representatives of cultural institutions in the three cities in Austria, as well as

Activities of the project

(by partners and associate partners)

1   Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels; SAVVY
     Contemporary (Berlin); Kulturen in Bewegung
     (Vienna).
2   Belinda Kazeem-Kaminski, "Unearthing. In
     Conversation: On Listening and Caring", *Journal of
     the Critical Ethnic Studies Association* (Vol. 4, Issue
     2, 2018).
3   Africa Museum; AFROPEAN; Ujazdowski Castle
     Centre for Contemporary Art
4   *Décolonisons les Arts,* 2018.
5   This exhibition, though not part of this Creative
     Europe project, opened on the first day of the
     Symposium Race Power & Culture, and was joined
     in its programme, for the relevance of its reflection
     on the notion and space of Afropolitanism.

the Festival for youth groups, provided a safe space for the expression of what the Afrodescendant experience is like within the country (Herold & Lobo).

Critical essays generated from the project symposia by academics, journalists and artists address a wide range of topics: the paradoxes of surveying diversity (Tinius); the complexity of decolonising institutions in general (Hillaert); the perpetuation of race by cultural institutions (Clette-Gakuba); the importance of addressing race and power and the concept of emotional inclusiveness (Koranteng-Kumi); and artists' strategies in the face of conflict with institutions (Fiagan).

Other contributions reflect on the psychological, spatial, virtual, and convivial virtues of inclusive terms such as Afropolitanism or Afropeanism, which identify the sharing of a human experience, such as those conveyed in the exhibition[5] *Multiple Transmissions: Art in the Afropolitan Age* (Colard), in the gaze-reversing travels echoed in the expression of "Looking B(l)ack" (Pitts), and in the Afrodescendant artistic landscape of Poland (Gutfranski).

The concept of "dis-othering" as an ongoing process has caught on with members of staff in the participating institutions. At BOZAR, a Chief Inclusion Officer will be appointed to work transversally on an institutional diversity and inclusion policy at the level of the Five Ps: Personnel, Public, Programmes, Partners, and Place. The Africa Museum continues to work on co-creation programming together with BOZAR. At Kulturen in Bewegung, new conscious and strategic shifts are being put in place to work with marginalised groups in Austria, particularly for developing more accessible language and formats for audiences. At Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, the younger generation of curators is taking on the battle for diversity in a difficult political context. These partners plan to join forces again to continue work together in a future project on inclusive vocabularies.

EXHIBITION

Geographies of Imagination
CURATED BY ANTONIA ALAMPI & BONAVENTURE SOH
BEJENG NDIKUNG
SAVVY CONTEMPORARY, BERLIN
SEPTEMBER 13–NOVEMBER 11, 2018
INVOCATIONS : SEPTEMBER 14, 2018
WORKSHOP : THE ABC OF RACIST EUROPE ;
SEPTEMBER 15, 2018

SYMPOSIUM

Looking B(l)ack : Travels as Gaze Reversal
CURATED BY JOHNY PITTS
CENTRE FOR FINE ARTS (BOZAR), BRUSSELS
OCTOBER 18–20, 2018

DISCUSSION SESSIONS

Let's Talk about Dis-Othering
CURATED BY KULTUREN INBEWEGUNG
@ POSTGARAGE CAFÉ, GRAZ
MAY 8, 2018
@ AFRICAN FUTURISMS FESTIVAL, ARS ELECTRONICA
CENTRE, LINZ
SEPTEMBER 22, 2018
@ KUNSTHALLE, VIENNA
NOVEMBER 22, 2018

DEBATES

Remember 100 years. What About Now?
@ KUNSTLERHAUS 1050, VIENNA
MAY 11, 2019
The Image of Africa in the Austrian Diaspora
@ KUNSTLERHAUS 1050, VIENNA
MAY 28, 2019

SYMPOSIUM

*Race, Power & Culture : A Critical Look at Belgian
Cultural Institutions*
CENTRE FOR FINE ARTS (BOZAR), BRUSSELS
CURATED BY BOZAR
MAY 22–24, 2019

FESTIVAL

Reflect
CURATED BY MARIA HEROLD & MARISSA LOBO
WUK, VIENNA
SEPTEMBER 6–8, 2019

RESIDENCIES

Johny Pitts:
W.E.B. Du Bois' journey to the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto
Joanna Grabski:
The specificity of place in Warsaw to explore
contemporary artistic projects in relation to
globalization.
Organised by Ujazdowski Castle Centre for
Contemporary Art, Warsaw
September 2019

PUBLICATIONS

*Beyond Afropolitan & Other Labels : On the
Complexities of Dis-Othering as a Process*
Edited by Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR), Brussels
December 2019
Obieg
Special edition on Dis-Othering
Edited by Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary
Art, Warsaw
December 2019

MAPPING DIVERSITIES

MAPPING DIVERSITIES

Mapping Diversities in Austria, Belgium, and Germany: An introduction to the polyvalent politics of diversity and the difficulties of dis-othering

TONICA HUNTER, NAOMI NTAKIYICA,
JONAS LEONHARD TINIUS

This survey set out from the observation that diversity in the arts and cultural production must be reflected in the dimensions of all three of the central Ps, namely Public, Programmes, and Personnel. Through joint research, interviews, and quantitative mapping, this project attempted to generate discussions around the possibilities and impossibilities of "mapping" diversity among the decision-making personnel of visual and performing arts organisations in the three biggest cities of the three partner countries involved in the *Dis-Othering* project: Austria, Belgium, and Germany. This project responded to the realisation that conversations on diversity are not merely questions of representation, but also of infrastructure. Policies and programmes that aspire to greater social and aesthetic diversity are incoherent if they do not correspond to the personnel that organises and oversees such cultural production. In the spirit of *Dis-Othering,* the *Mapping Diversity* sub-project thus reverted the gaze back at the very same organisations that provoke conversations on diversity, reflecting critically on the possibilities and impossibilities of what diversity is, does, and imagines.

In light of ongoing political discussions on nationalism, discrimination, and racism in Europe, and responding to an ever more connected and more heard set of voices calling for an inter-sectional point of view on artistic and cultural production, this project focused its examination on the grappling with diversity, and its ambivalent lives. In particular, we created drop-down options to open up diversity across a number of widely used markers, many of which we revised critically after internal conversations. These included nationality (nationality at birth), migration background, gender and sexual orientation, and others. Both as a means to challenge institutions, and as a form of reinscription of markers of difference, diversity is a concept that can initiate social change and reiterate distinctions that are at the heart of discrimination. For this reason, the survey focused on *perceptions* of diversity within institutions, conceptions of programming and publics, and statistics of diversity within executive or managerial staff. Diversity among decision-making level staff, that is, the diversity of those exercising power and in charge of budgets, has a great impact on the defining of an organisation's trajectories, programming, and public outreach. Our project sought to interrogate precisely those organising levels, so as to provoke the kind of self-reflection and reversed form of analysis called for by the idea and the practice of dis-othering.

The three researchers hired to take on this mapping exercise worked together on developing the tools for the mapping research over several months of joint conversations, both in partner meetings and via digital means of communication. The methodology initially foresaw a target sample of 45 institutions, with 15 in each country, including the five largest institutions (receiving state funding) in the visual and performing arts in each of the three biggest cities, which were chosen on the basis of

13

their relevance for cultural production and their exposure to demographic diversity. The cities chosen were Brussels, Liège and Antwerp, in Belgium (a choice that also reflected a balance between the national languages); Vienna, Linz and Graz, in Austria; and Berlin, Hamburg and Munich, in Germany. It is to be noted that BOZAR itself also participated in the mapping of the Belgian organisations.

The methodology also foresaw both qualitative and quantitative data collection. So far as qualitative data collection is concerned, individual, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were designed and conducted with what we referred to as "institutional gatekeepers". These were generally directors or curators whom we identified based on their overall comprehension of and influence on the organisation's programming, human resources, and publics. This positionality affords them a position to share insights on "the three Ps" during the interviews, and to facilitate the distribution of an individual and anonymous online survey among the institution's decision-making staff. In order to do this, the organisational chart was discussed together with the gatekeeper, in order to identify potential participants.

The questions to the gatekeeper covered the role of diversity in the institution at the level of Programming, Public, and Personnel. The interviews took place in the institutions and were mostly conducted individually by researchers, in a range of languages (German, French, Dutch, and English). In two cases, other staff members accompanied the general directors to complement their answers. In order to obtain a more nuanced insight on diversity within the institution, the researchers decided to complement interviews with the gatekeepers with further interviews from staff members who had volunteered to share their experiences and thoughts on the topic. We limited these interviews to one per institution. This led

to four extra interviews, of which three took place inside the institution and one was conducted by means of telephonic interview. All interviews were recorded with the consent of the respondent and elaborate notes were also taken during the interviews.

So far as the quantitative data collection is concerned, an online, individual, and anonymised survey was designed with the provider *SurveyMonkey* in English and translated into French and Dutch. It was distributed among staff members of the participating institutions, as identified by each institution's gatekeeper. The survey consisted of 41 multiple-choice questions on the level of diversity in Programming, Public, and Personnel. The majority of the questions had the option of adding comments and were designed to invite not just full sentences, but also challenges to the framing of the questions. The survey asked questions of the respondents with regard to their status and self-identification in terms of gender, sexual orientation, religion or faith, nationality, and migration background, among others. The survey also invited participants to specify the city in which they were working, but due to the need to safeguard privacy, the latter were not asked to specify the institution in which they were working. At the end of the survey, however, respondents were asked if they would be interested in sharing their opinion on this topic in an individual interview, which would be made possible by filling in their e-mail address. At this point, respondents ceased to be anonymous to the interviewer, though there was still a guarantee of anonymity so far as any eventual publication was concerned.

The findings analysis, presented further below for each country, contextualises results within national contexts and local politics, which were composed in order to better understand and frame the results.
In the process of this project, the researchers

quickly found themselves facing several challenges and limitations: how to identify institutions that represent good case studies without them being evident examples of either best or worst practice; how to design questionnaires that would open rather than foreclose interviews with gatekeepers; ambivalent responses to the survey and common misunderstandings of the concepts of diversity; and most importantly, the paradox of having to create "othering" categories in a survey in order to expose "othering" practices. The researchers decided that these very observations would represent, in and of themselves, important elements of the survey's qualitative results.

The intent of the team was not to generate an exhaustive mapping of diversity among the personnel in all of these selected cultural organisations, which was way beyond the means and scope of the project, nor was it to compare them against each other. Instead, the researchers sought to engage with the common ethical issues and political challenges of dealing with diversity in and among artists, curators, scholars, and cultural institutions, and to raise awareness about these complex processes – and their misunderstanding – and about the dual-political nature of diversity and othering, both as a political strategy of inclusion and a potentially foreclosing reinscription of difference.

The organisations and individuals participating in our project engaged in constructive reflections, themselves generating suggestions for how to devise and revise their own practices of engaging with diversity policies. The survey invitations and responses (as well as the lack thereof) also instigated an ongoing discussion among the team members and the participating organisations about the difference of pace between different countries and different institutions; the unexpected forms of resistance and the impasses that frustrate inquiries about

diversity; and the evident ambivalence around questions of diversity that prompted the entire project to unfold in a manner that was hesitant and careful, yet insistent on the importance of the overall conversation. Further research, discussion, and openness on behalf of cultural and artistic organisations is necessary to further facilitate a public reckoning with the polyvalent politics of diversity.

In conclusion, we want to state that the *Mapping Diversity* sub-project, within the overall programme of *Dis-Othering,* opened unexpected paths in and around the ambivalent notion of diversity, and created many more possible ways than could be investigated here of exploring questions of racism, exploitation, and appropriation within the field of contemporary cultural and artistic production. As the coordinator of the research team, Jonas Tinius, puts it: "The questions that led to the formulation of a sub-project on the mapping of diversity within the broader *Dis-Othering* case study were questions about representation and infrastructures: who can represent whom? In whose interest is diversity work done, and to what effects? […] The project has not led to the scale and scope of quantitative results that the curators initially hoped for, and the reasons for this failure are themselves testament to the broader problem the survey sought to address: too little money, time, and human resources. […] Yet, within the boundaries and limitations of the project itself, it provoked a sensibility among the institutions that partook in the design of the survey about the complexity and multiple presences of difference at play – and it began a conversation, instigated by curatorial trouble-makers, about the need to reflect on, refine, and even dis-other strategic mobilisations of diversity in the cultural and artistic field and beyond".[1]

From the research conducted, we wish to highlight a summary of key observations.

Diversity policy was lacking. An overt stance on diversity seemed to be something that most of the participating organisations knew they needed, in some format, but which either did not yet exist, or existed in a form that was not formally implemented, or formally discussed by staff on a general or managerial level. In some cases, personnel were not aware of any diversity policy at all. This was an indication of a lack of thorough application of diversity principles or policies, but several organisations also refused to formulate and adopt such a policy in the first place. Acknowledgement of gaps in diversity and inclusion policy was limited, especially when no specialised staff member, focus group, or even guiding principles were operated or hired within the institution.

There are divergent understandings of diversity. Across the institutions and organisations surveyed and the gatekeepers interviewed, it became clear that diversity is understood in a broad variety of ways. There is, as it were, a diversity in the understanding of diversity that ranges from a technocratic understanding of diversity as a range of perspectives, to diversity as an intersectional issue that spans questions of class, race, and gender.

Diversity is not an issue in its own right. Something which was very striking from the gatekeeper interviews was the fact that there is a tendency within cultural institutions for their marketing and market research departments to become the overseers on issues of audience, public, and feedback. This makes sense, of course, in terms of target audience and the successful output of the institutions. Yet beyond a simple question of the numbers of visitors to exhibitions and positive feedback or critique, the issue of audience diversity and access to art becomes somewhat sidelined.

Good work is being done. In many of our interviews and surveys, we came across examples of good practice that seemed to touch upon the issues connected to diversity with sensitivity and a genuine interest, and the implementation of actions aiming for improvement within

organisations. These examples should be highlighted, rather than relegated into spheres of mediation, pedagogy, or secondary aspects of cultural organisations' work, in order to encourage similar organisations to foster awareness of why these approaches are important. Scholarship could also show the nuts and bolts of such processes, and underline the efforts undertaken (often) by individuals, and in particular, by individuals in precarious minoritarian positions within bigger apparatuses that may block or render invisible their labour.

Help is still needed. Beyond the revelation of a few measures that seemed to focus on education and targeted communities, research in each of the countries revealed knowledge gaps in how to create more diverse programming and hiring personnel within cultural institutions – work that was often relegated either to partner institutions or, for example, to people with certain minority backgrounds who were tasked with speaking to, or reaching out to other people with similar backgrounds. There was a reluctance to admit this was the main obstacle, and this even hindered responses to our interviews and surveys, since interlocutors did not want to expose areas of uncertainty and lack of awareness within their organisations.

Organisations seem to genuinely want to do better and realise the importance of diversity. A resounding positive point that came across in all of the institutions interviewed and surveyed in Austria, Germany, and Belgium is the volition to do better. To remain self-critical and reflective would now lie in dispelling complacent attitudes, such as claiming better approaches to diversity are only limited by financial (and therefore external) factors. Knowledge of the socio-political context of each country in our survey exists, and its diverse past as well as its present can lead to an acceptance of its public need for cultural institutions that acknowledge and reflect this. Colour-blindness, ahistorical collective memory, or tokenistic measures are not the way forward; these issues must be addressed and openly discussed.

NOTES

1   See "Troubling Diversity and Iterations of Difference"; excerpt from a longer essay republished in this catalogue.

Mapping Diversities: Notes on Austria

TONICA HUNTER

1. THE AUSTRIAN CONTEXT

"Austria still imagines itself to be homogenous, white and German-speaking." (Blasckhe, 2015, p. 51)

The Austria we know today is "as diverse" as it has always been. What has changed over time, and increasingly so with the effects of globalisation and international migration to Europe, is the plurality of languages, religions, ethnicities, phenotypes, genders and sexual orientations of the groups that make up the country's rich population today.

Austria's development as a nation-state began as far back as the second half of the nineteenth century, in the guise of Austria-Hungary. The process of defining itself as a nation proved difficult due to the abundance of culturally diverse groups that fell under the territories of the Habsburg Empire. Austria therefore struggled in its own nation-building agenda since, in the sense of the word 'nation' as it was being defined across Europe, it contained not one, but many "nations".

The founding of the Republic of Austria in 1918 marked the beginnings of the Austrian state as it is understood today, albeit with a weak sense of national identity, which came with its diverse history. The fact that Austria has been home to (amongst others) Croats, Slovenes, the Roma community, Czechs, Slovaks, the Jewish community, Serbians, Germans, and Hungarians,

and more recently to Turks, Asians, Africans, Latin Americans and more besides, shows that not much has changed. Back then, it led to a weak sense of national consciousness, whereby the state implemented an approach of aggressive assimilation, by means of language and education. Today, the feeling of being "not really Austrian" still persists amongst 2nd and 3rd generations of migrant heritage and is capitalised on through the use of anti-immigrant rhetoric in political campaigns. All of which is to say that the discourse on the diversity of Austria has always been complex to define, hard to tease out, and coupled with an inherent denial that the country is home to diverse groups of people other than the White "Austrian". How did Austria's way of seeing itself and its population become manifest within the spheres of art and culture?

"Historiography served to invent a national past and a communal culture, which was then visualised in museums." (Rupnow, 2017, p. 42)

The task of *Dis-Othering* in Austria, or specifically – as in the scope of this study – within Austria's cultural institutions, brings to light some of the complexities inherent in grasping the concept of diversity. As also demonstrated in the sections below, the research results for Austria highlight the acknowledgement of the fact that there is much to be done, conversations that need to be had honestly and openly, and resources to be allocated for support within the nation's cultural institutions in the areas of equality, inclusion and/or diversity, however they choose to name it.

The following sections give a background to some of the topics of relevance to the study for the case of Austria, and present the research findings.

a.   Demographics

Austria's current population is estimated at 8.96 million, up from its last official census in 2011.[1] The country is landlocked, sharing its borders with Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia, Germany, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic. The majority of the population speaks German, which is also the country's official language, yet other local official languages include Croatian, Hungarian and Slovenian. The number of people living in Austria but born elsewhere has increased by around 35% over the last ten years. It is estimated that 81% of Austria's population has no migration background, while about 19% has at least one parent of migrant background. In Vienna, its most populated city, the population with a migration background totalled 1.898 million people, of whom 1.4149 million were born abroad, while 483,100 were born in Austria, but were descendants of foreign-born parents, and thus counted as "second generation".[2]

The division of Austria into its *Bundesländer* (federal states) reveals that Vienna is the most highly populated and the most diverse in terms of citizenship,[3] followed by Upper Austria, Lower Austria and Styria. Within three of those four federal districts are the country's three largest cities: Vienna (Vienna), Linz (Upper Austria) and Graz (Styria). It is on these three cities that our research is focussed.

b.   Austria's Colonial (Un)Memory[4]

Austria made many attempts to acquire colonial territories, which were all in vain (Krobb, 2012). However, it is not only the formal, physical acquisition of space that constitutes the process of colonisation. Austria helped to enable European colonial rule through its contribution

to a range of activities from missions (travel) to missionaries, and in commercial exploitation, research and science that was to the benefit of colonisation. Expeditions outside of Europe can be traced throughout Habsburg history, from Mexico to Tasmania. Austria also dedicated human resources and arms for expeditions with colonial implications. Geographers such as Oscar Baumann, who worked for the Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft in the 1880s, played a huge role in cartography, research and education across lands that were colonised by other colonial powers from across Europe. What is particularly noteworthy, given the links and contributions to colonial research and discourse, is the outright denial of any formal colonial conquest on the part of Austria, since it was not deemed to be a colonial power in the manner of Britain, France, or Belgium. There is a dissociation, therefore, that is inherent in Austria's questionable role in the treatment of (in this case) African art, artefacts and artists, and the connections to these contexts and their visibility and place in the collective memory. Mention of Austria's ties to a colonial past is rarely found in the educational system, for example, or at memorial sites, or in the public space. How this is dealt with (or not) in the cultural sphere is therefore insightful.

c.   Migration and Migrant Groups

In Austria, the 1961 census was the first to register statistical migration flows by collecting data on respondents' place of residence five years before the census. This approach was limited in that it only allowed for a rough approximation of migration flows. In 1996, a statistical system was introduced, which registered migration flows between all Austrian municipalities, as well as migrations involving foreign countries.[5] From the second half of the twentieth century, Austria has been a country of immigration. It is

largely glossed over that prior to that, Austria was in fact predominantly a country of emigration (Runpow, 2017). Following a need for post-war migrant labour, there was a demand for and an increase in the immigration of so-called *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) from Spain, Turkey, and the former Yugoslavia in the 1960s and '70s, not to mention European refugees after World War II following "the expulsion of ethnic Germans in 1945 and refugee movements from Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, Poland in the 1980s, and ex-Yugoslavia in the 1990s" (Runpow, 2017, p. 49).

As well as migration to Austria, diverse groups already within Austria also began to seek out their rights. The foundations of Austrian legal frameworks for integration, naturalisation and migration were thrown into question. One result of this was the establishment of the State Treaty of 1955, which provided grounds in law for the recognition of various cultural groups across the country. Two decades later, in 1976, special rights were established in the Ethnic Group Act *(Volksgruppengesetz)* for Croatian, Slovenian, Hungarian, Czech and Slovak ethnic groups, as well as Roma. Subsequently home to 2nd and 3rd generation Austrians of non-Western descent, some with phenotypically different appearance, some with different religions, and many with second and third languages spoken within the family home, Austria has been no stranger to xenophobic and discriminatory practices towards so-called minorities in reaction to these changes. This is important to understand since the conflation of immigration with ethnic minorities and the resulting racial discrimination are all linked to an association with the "other", with the non-Austrian, and with rejected notions of a diverse Austria being standard.

The refugee "crisis"[6] of 2015 directly impacted Austria and its border with Hungary: border controls were reinforced in order to

reduce the number of refugees crossing into the country. Despite the efforts in Vienna to support and in many cases home the refugees who made it into Austria, the government stance on this was a resoundingly restrictive one. Runpow (2017) notes how this phenomenon seems to take precedence in the collective memory of migration and migrant groups in Austria (and in fact across Europe) linking various ethnic groups to the refugee "crisis" and the histories of migrants and migration in Austria.

d.   "Race", Blackness, and the Stigmatisation of Ethnicity

Since *Dis-Othering* in this project had a focus on Africa's representation, it is apt to contextualise the situation and history of Black Austrians and Black people living in Austria.

Austria's Black community is estimated to be around 40,000 people, but being Black is often seen as incongruous with being Austrian (Johnston-Arthur, 2000; Unterweger, 2016). This form of racialised stigmatisation for the purpose of discrimination is broadened to incorporate people from the former Yugoslavia, Roma, Asians, and Latin Americans, and finds its roots as far back as the Habsburg Empire and the negation of minority cultures in preference of a majority, dominant White one. In the 1930s in Austria, this dehumanising concept most infamously gained traction under the National Socialist reign where the depiction of the "subhuman" *Untermensch* muddled notions of science (eugenics) with notions of race and morality.

In the case of Black Austrians, and/or Black people in Austria, a deliberate othering tactic, which can be traced in education (children's books and games), in popular culture (songs, nursery rhymes), and in formal institutions (workplace, police) is the portrayal of black as bad and white as good. Dr Araba Evelyn Johnston-Arthur notes that language describing "good"

and "bad" was racialised as early as her school days in Austria, in that a fear created around and about the "Black man" established an early dichotomy between white and black as far back as games in the school playground were concerned (Johnston-Arthur, 2000, p. 154). This inherent stigmatisation of Blackness in play was in reality a microcosm for the ethnicisation of crime, and the development of xenophobia and Islamophobia on a macro level – since Christianity and Catholicism were by contrast synonymous with goodness and purity. According to this perspective, Black Austrians are often a group of people unrecognised as Austrian by a White majority (Johnston-Arthur 2000, p. 157), the most glaring examples being the numerous cases of Austrians (who are deemed phenotypically "non-White") having to provide their legal identity.[7] As Runpow puts it, the ideas "of nation have time and again been contaminated with ethnicity" (2017, p. 42).

Earlier perceptions of Blackness in the socio-cultural field can be seen in the case of Angelo Soliman. In eighteenth-century Europe, Soliman was a slave captured and passed around from France to Italy, and eventually to Austrian households and masters. He was essentially groomed to prove the malleability and acquiescence of the Black subject and at the same time celebrated for his intelligence and culturally "advanced" way of thinking, in the world of Freemasonry. Despite (or because of) this, instead of receiving a Christian burial after his death, at the request of the director of the Imperial Natural History Collection, he was instead skinned, stuffed and made into an exhibit alongside stuffed animals within a "cabinet of curiosities". This fall from grace, going very quickly from the "status" of a distinguished member of Vienna's intellectually elite to that of an exotic specimen, highlights the dubious and precarious role he possessed as a Black man in Austria. In short,

Soliman's hard work was all in vain since he was still exhibited as an exemplary African "savage". Soliman's daughter, Josefine, fought to have his remains returned to the family, but this was also in vain.

It is apparent that the categorical and persistent stigmatisation of Blackness and the ostracisation of Black Austrians from being "truly Austrian" has impacted Black communities in Austria greatly. It is noteworthy, therefore, that the Black community in Austria has reacted by taking charge of its own history, portrayals and definitions. Self-organising communities[8] that address the breadth of Blackness and its intersectionality have increasingly gained ground. From research organisations such as Pamoja,[9] to activists, journalists (Simon Inou, Claudia Unterweger), politicians (Marie-Edwige Hartig, amongst others), and scholars (Araba Evelyn Johnston-Arthur, Belinda Kazeem-Kaminski) focusing on this topic, as well as artistic platforms[10] and collectives,[11] the Black community has itself deliberately centred and dominated discourse as a sort of reversal of an othering gaze and the role of the African Diaspora and being Black (Austrian or not) in Austria. The sense of this claiming back of identity and discourse is felt more and more across the country.

2. FINDINGS

a.   Finding Co-Operative Institutions

For Austria, the initial list of institutions, from the three biggest cities of Vienna, Graz and Linz, comprised a mixture of performing arts institutions, such as theatres, but also institutions for the applied and the fine arts, as well as dance institutions and one festival. The institutions contacted (identified by type) can be found in the annex.

We did not expect such a low response rate to the research overall. In the case of Austria, as detailed in *Let's Talk about Dis-Othering* events description, there were three discursive and well attended events in Graz, Linz and Vienna, with the purpose of these talks being to address – on both an institutional and a more engaged community and artist level – the existing practices of othering and ways to "disother" in the arts. It was therefore surprising, upon following up with the speakers for interview, many of whom had expressed interest to be interviewed at the talks, that there was a dwindling in their willingness to participate in the exercise.

Of the 15 institutions that we contacted, 4 replied for interviews, of which 3 sent the mapping diversity survey around to further colleagues. In 2 of the 4 cases that did take part in the interview, it was the directors of the institution who obliged; one of the other respondents was a head curator and in the final case it was a senior member of staff in exhibition management and curation.

From the 3 institutions who did send around surveys, we received 17 responses in total. Given the limited number of responses to use as data, we are able to ascertain quite clear answers from each of the three institutions (one did not take part in the survey), but we cannot claim that they are representative. They do however provide some interesting points of self-reflection on diversity within their institutions. It is important to note that although 17 participating individuals accepted the conditions of the survey and proceeded onward to the survey, there were only 10 responses to some individual questions. Participants may well have skipped through some answers due to the survey being 40 questions long. One of the responses in fact included an answer saying that the survey was "too long".

Of the remaining 11 institutions that were on the original list and contacted, 2 which were

in fact present (in the audience or on the panel) at the *Dis-Othering* talks outright declined. The other 9 simply did not reply to the initial email, which included background information on the project as well as the aims of its research and mapping. If an email was not replied to, calls were made to the direct contact if we had one, or to the administrative body within the institution.

The findings below, given the low response rate, merge qualitative and quantitative results to give a holistic picture of both the managerial and the personal (and personnel) perspectives within the 4 institutions that responded. Quotations are anonymised, as are survey responses. It is indicated whether the information comes from the interviews or the survey, for reasons of clarity, and also for comparisons between the different positions of power and different voices within the institutions.

b.   Diversity Policy

Results revealed that diversity policy is an area that is still unclear in many cases. From the gatekeeper interviews, two of the institutions said they did not have an outright diversity policy: "we don't have a policy" [...] "but we do have a mission statement", which, according to them, makes suggestions for practices that touch upon inclusion more generically. Further details were not provided.

This was similar to another gatekeeper interview: "In Austria there are no diversity criteria per se, but we [the institution] like the idea that people have different backgrounds and experiences". This institution also said that it not only has a written policy, but it also has a staff association *(Betriebsrat)* with a dedicated member of staff.

Another director said that their institution had information available on their website for the public to consult, although I was not able to find this information online when I searched for

it. Another institution did not explicitly mention a policy, apart from that of equal pay between "male and female employees".

In the survey, in a vast contrast to what the gatekeepers said, 90% of respondents said they did not have, or did not know of their institution having a diversity policy. This shows that despite there being iterations of such documents, the staff themselves were not aware of them. How then can diversity principles be adhered to or implemented within these institutions?

Perhaps it was the wording that some respondents did not relate to. Both the interviews and the survey rather highlighted that "inclusion" was a term that resonated with respondents: "Inclusion and participation mean a lot to the museum", said one of the gatekeepers. In the survey, 40% of respondents said their institution was diverse due to the inclusion of handicapped people, or through educational programmes and fellowships. In those ways they felt the institutions were doing their part. "There is a young man using a wheelchair who is working at the reception" was one example cited by another gatekeeper.

c.   Public

At the gatekeeper interview level, interviewees made it clear that their public was a priority in their work. For some, their public seemed more of a focus than looking inward at their personnel, for example: "Diversity issues are related to our audience", but "race" or ethnicity were not so important to other institutions in the scheme of diversity: "less the colour of people, this is not an issue". It seemed in this case there was aversion to discussing race and dismissing it as not really being an issue for this institution, or that the ethnic diversity of those visiting the museum was sufficient.

Nonetheless, it was admitted in another interview that the institution's "audience could change a bit and could be more inclusive". This was the case, just a bit more strongly felt, in the surveys. 70% of participants in the survey felt that their institutional approach did not reflect the diverse make-up of the city. One participant stated that "the programming only reflects the interest of a very limited number of highly educated people and is not successful at engaging with [...] a broader demographic that would be more representative of the people who live in the city".

From the gatekeeper interviews, many interviews revealed schemes that targeted specific communities and went into more depth. In one institution, they had reached out to communities and other initiatives (through partnerships) at the grassroots level in Vienna's more diverse districts, such as (the director quoted) its "15th, 16th, 10th, and 11th districts", whose residents, according to this interview, were not as frequent in visiting the museums as some others across Vienna. Without statistical evidence it was not easy to say much more about this trend and the numbers recorded by the institutions. In Vienna there is undoubtedly a stigmatisation of the more diverse districts with higher immigrant populations, which makes the claim for the involvement of these groups equally pertinent and problematic, if the right measures are not taken.

"A museum is always an exclusive institution" said one survey respondent, which leaves open the question about how inclusive their approaches to reaching the diverse audience of Vienna might be, if the belief is that such institutions are always by default a place of exclusion. In any case, this response seemed to reveal an issue with access and suggested that this is an obstacle with such institutions. 90% of respondents to the survey said that they thought diversity criteria and quotas were needed in the area of its public. One solution to this was cited in an interview in which the institution's "big, long-

term project is that we remove admission fees entirely to open up access".

One of the main areas that came up in terms of diversity and access to the museum from different public groups concerned initiatives involving collaborations with educational bodies. All of the institutions had a link to either a school or university. Deliberate strategies to be diverse in reaching their public therefore included using modern technology methods to reach out to a younger audience for their interactive art installations, having "developed an education app with a school with students and schools". Equally cited were "projects in collaboration with the city's arts university"... [where] they have emphasis on queer issues, and migration, for example, so whenever we collaborate those are brought to the forefront". Almost all gatekeepers mentioned their use of educational programmes, another had Sunday tours aimed at young people and school class tours too. One gatekeeper shared that they had programmes where art educators worked with classes of apprentices in manual labour and remarked that "then you have 100% a migrant background who never thought they would be interested in modern art".

d.   Personnel

"If you want to make a diverse programme you need a diverse staff – otherwise it will always seem artificial" – A survey respondent.

From the surveys, regarding the diversity of decision-making staff, 5 out of 10 people believe their institution is "not at all diverse" and 4 think it is "a little diverse". One institution said "very diverse" in the form of gender.[12] Another survey respondent said that "the vast majority of department heads are White males. This contrasts sharply with the majority of female employees in total". This comment was the case for managerial positions and did not seem to ring true when it came to lower level positions in

institutions that had more female staff. In one institution, the director explained that apart from an imbalance towards mainly female curators at the institution, one criterion for diversity within its staff was mainly in the area of languages. For example, they said that the institution offered their services to the public in over 20 languages and that its diverse staff meant there was even the possibility of speaking in 3 dialects from a country in Africa.

The surveys collated demographic information of the respondents too. From this it was recorded that:

- 70% were female and 30% male; the other categories of gender we included were not selected
- 50% of respondents to the survey were between 25 and 34 years old
- 90% of respondents said they did not have a migrant background
- 70% of respondents defined as heterosexual; 10% preferred not to say
- 40% of respondents were atheist, 20% agnostic, and 20% Christian
- 60% of respondents had a Master's degree, and 20% a PhD
- The languages predominantly spoken within their institutions were firstly German, then English, followed by French and then Italian.

On a lower, more general level, according to the survey responses, diversity is more visible with 8 out of 10 responses opting for the category of "a little diverse" and 2 for "not at all diverse". "There is still a lot of *Spielraum*", according to one gatekeeper interview. These opinions were also reflected in other interviews. One director said that their museum has a member of staff from an East African country, thereafter lamenting the fact that there was in fact covert critique because

of the fact they had hired a member of staff that was Black. So even when there were examples of successful diverse hiring, it was not positively received (externally), which the institution was made aware of.

Another comment from this director was that the average member of the museum's curatorial staff was quite "old" and that these members generally possessed permanent contracts – as opposed to those who had answered the survey who were on average young and many of whom had limited-term contracts. It happened to be a trend across the interviews feedback that the younger staff were seen as having more presence in Marketing and PR departments of the institutions, whereas managerial and curatorial staff were older, and on permanent contracts. This was something gatekeepers either admitted to as issues, or stated as a fact. One institution said that there were two young people with "fresh ideas" being brought into the PR Marketing and *Kulturvermittlung* which tended to change quite a bit. It also became clear from this and the other interviews that it is the Marketing/Outreach departments that deal with the feedback from the public on the content output of the institutions. Instead of having departments dedicated to the issues of diversity and inclusion, surveys collected at the entrance to museums, or feedback online or through market research take more of a snapshot of visitors, as they are intended for an annual report or *Jahresbericht* (mentioned by two institutions) and reporting purposes. Only one institution said that this data has been fed back into programming. Another gatekeeper said: "Diversity is the thing that comes up the least in the feedback" – it is not said, however, how user feedback is collated by the institution, or how any potential questions on those issues are posed.

One of the gatekeeper interviewees was proud to share that ethnic diversity was in fact rife within their institution in comparison with the average low diversity of institutions in its city: "I know that we have Latin America, South America, Africa, the Balkans from Spain, France and the UK, and Japan and the latter is a curator in fact". They were aware of how rare this was for the city and even went on to say their work is an open desk between a young diverse team who all have input in curation and decision-making, whether in curatorial or exhibition management, or production. Already communicated as a rarity, this certainly contrasted with another interview wherein the gatekeeper explained that their travel for work is restricted to Europe which "of course limits my perception within the arts scene". Overall this gatekeeper believed that they are still "at the starting point" when it comes to diversity, and that there is an awareness of this gap. They noted that in terms of the teams, they "could be far more diverse. We are very European".

e.   Programming

"To represent 'Africa' (for example) is nonsense and
doesn't work." – A gatekeeper.

All gatekeeper interviews revealed that exhibitions were curated featuring international artists and works. One institution had no international residency programmes but still collaborates with other institutions, although it was remarked that "these are predominantly European institutions" and budgetary limitations were cited as a huge reason for this. From the interviews, two of the four institutions interviewed had a clear agenda when it came to fostering international connections in the arts and culture sphere. One of the institutions also has a residency programme for international artists in another Western country. They also have partner institutions all over the world,

which foster collaborations across Europe, Asia, and elsewhere. Another of the institutions has a dedicated outreach department, which aims to work by targeting various groups in order to interact with them. In this vein, connections were seemingly good and a cause of pride for the institution.

On the question of international content, however, another director claimed that since "Austria has no colonies [...] there cannot be any connection" to the country (in Africa) on which their exhibition focused a few years ago. This director felt that intrigue with the works of African artists in particular was "not just exotic interest". They went on to explain that the focus was not then on non-existent historical connections, but rather on interesting, "non-obvious", new connections between the two countries. From these accounts, therefore, there seemed to be a clear disconnect between international connections and residencies, the curation of international (non-European) artists and art, and knowledge of how to credibly and sensitively conduct this practice within the institutions.

In this area of the research, the results revealed that there were solid examples of reflective, informed and inclusive work being done amongst the institutions that were interviewed. The gatekeeper in one case, the director of the institution, was open to admit that within Austria there was a long way to go in terms of inclusion, but claimed that within the institution that he worked at, they had already begun to tackle this. One of the main ways they had achieved this at this particular organisation was through the involvement of the communities or nationalities referred to in the works or artefacts, by means of an initiative that asked members of the communities to present the works exhibited. The director claimed that for his institution, Austria's involvement in Europe's

colonial history was not covered up, but had instead been admitted and had been dealt with in previous exhibitions.

Another one of the interviewed institutions also shared an example of good practice within the curation and programming approach. Their biggest exhibition at the time of interview was dealing with artists from a specific country in Asia. The process of the selection and acquisition of the works involved firstly working with two of their curators in the country and the artists then being invited to write the explanations and labelling of the pieces themselves, rather than this being done by the museum. The director went on to explain that their museum does not aim to clarify or explain the works of others, but rather to provide a platform for artists to explain their own works. The director also travelled to artists' workshops in the country and the selection process with specialists took place in its main city.

In this area it was therefore apparent that there were mixed results in terms of the programming of non-European artists and art. Survey results showed that 50% of respondents felt that the institution rarely developed programming with representatives from diverse communities, while the other 50% said that they did and did so often. In the elaboration of these answers it was revealed that 60% of those who said that their institution did develop such programming (both rarely and often) based this on educational cooperation; 40% was through diverse communities and ethnic diversity.

REFERENCES

Johnston-Arthur, Araba Evelyn, "Schwarze Erfahrungen der jungen afrikanischen Diaspora in Österreich", in Karl A. Kumpfmüller (ed.), *Europas Langer Schatten*, Brandes & Apsel / Südwin, Frankfurt A. M., 2000.

Loidl, Simon, "Colonialism through Emigration: Publications and Activities of the Österreichisch-Ungarische Kolonialgesellschaft (1894–1918)", in Jon Hughes and Florain Krobb (eds.), *Colonial Austria: Austria and the Overseas*, Modern Humanities Research Association, [London], 2012.

Gruber, Oliver, "From Niche to Mainstream: Electoral Politicization of Immigration, Migrant Integration and Ethnic Diversity in Austria", University Dissertation, University of Vienna, 2012.

Georgi, Fabian, "Nation-State Building and Cultural Diversity in Austria", in Jochen Blaschke (ed.), *Nation-State Building Processes and Cultural Diversity*, Berlin: Edition Parabolis, 2005.

Unterweger, Claudia, *Talking Back: Strategien Schwarzer österreichischer Geschichtsschreibung*, Vienna: Zaglossus, 2016.

Rupnow, Dirk, "The History and Memory of Migration in Post-War Austria", in Günter Bischof and Dirk Rupnow (eds.), *Migration in Austria* (2017), *Contemporary Austrian Studies*, Volume 26.

Hintermann, Christiane, "Marginalized Memories: The In(visibility) of Migration History in Public Space in Austria", in Günter Bischof and Dirk Rupnow (eds.), *Migration in Austria* (2017), *Contemporary Austrian Studies*, Volume 26.

file://r200/eigened/onbtoh/Downloads/results_overview_population_1951_to_2017_by_demographic_characteristics.pdf

NOTES

1   http://www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/PeopleSociety/population/population_censuses_register_based_census_register_based_labour_market_statistics/index.html
2   https://www.austria.org/population
3   file://r200/eigened/onbtoh/Downloads/population_2017_by_citizenship_and_laender%20(1).pdf
4   I use the term "unmemory" to refer to the lack of memory and/or the different ways of erasing or denying memory, which constitute the evasion of historical fact.
5   http://www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/PeopleSociety/population/migration/index.html
6   Runpow comments on how it was only seen as a crisis when refugees turned up on Austrian soil (2017, 37).
7   Given that this is not a legal obligation for an Austrian citizen, it is a highly problematic demand. Their White Austrian counterparts do not face the burden or risk of this kind of encounter.
8, 9, 10, 11
    See, for example, https://afrorainbow.at/, or
    https://www.schwarzefrauen.net/
    https://www.facebook.com/pg/pamojamovement/about/?ref=page_internal
    https://www.instagram.com/seriesblackvienna/
    https://www.facebook.com/sobvienna/
12 Deduced from the elaborations in the answers that inferred this was in regard to gender.
13 My own translation: "leeway".

"I THINK IS IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE THESE SURVEYS. THE ISSUE IS, THE ONES WHO DO NOT REPLY, NEED TO WORK ON THESE ISSUES MORE URGENTLY"

from the *Mapping Diversity* interviews or surveys, comment kept anonymous

"THE DIRECTOR DOES NOT HAVE TIME FOR THIS"

"MY OWN REPLACEMENT WILL BE A WHITE STRAIGHT MAN. THE CANDIDATES WHO HAD A LESS PRIVILEGED PROFILE WERE LESS COMPETENT"

from the *Mapping Diversity* interviews or surveys,
comment kept anonymous

Mapping Diversities: Notes on Belgium

NAOMI NTAKIYICA

I. THE BELGIAN CONTEXT

a.   Demographics

Belgium is a small country with a dense and diverse population. An area of some 30,000 km^2 hosts a population of 11 million inhabitants. Over half of the population lives in Flanders, with a quarter resident in Wallonia, and over 10% living in the capital of Brussels.[1]

Both Brussels and Antwerp are known for their diverse population. Brussels, the capital of Europe, welcomes 182 different nationalities, thus effectively standing as the second most diverse city in the world – after Dubai.[2] Both these Belgian cities have become majority-minority cities, as more than half of their inhabitants have a migration background (with at least one parent having a non-Belgian nationality): 70.4% in the case of Brussels and 50.1% for Antwerp. These ratios have grown in recent decades, as have the number of countries of origin, generating a diversification of diversity. This phenomenon is better known as superdiversity.[3]

b.   Multi-Layered Governments and Fragmented Cultural Mandates

The Belgian context is particular, due to its multi-level (federal, regional and community) governments, which are separated along geographical and linguistic lines. Such construction results in divided responsibilities for cultural policies, but also diverse political environments, as could be seen clearly in the results of the most recent elections, with a majority of right-wing votes in Flanders, socialist and liberal votes in Wallonia, and socialist and green votes in Brussels.[4] In this context, the city of Brussels finds itself with no cultural policy really adapted to its superdiversity. In this context, both the city of Brussels and Belgium as a whole find themselves without coherent cultural policies really adapted to their diversity.

c.   Colonialism

Another particularity in the Belgian context is the country's colonial history and its treatment. Not only is this chapter of Belgian history largely ignored, or only poorly addressed in most school curricula, but colonial remnants – from street names to statues glorifying the colonial power – still occupy the urban landscape without much questioning. One iconic legacy of colonial heritage is the former Royal Museum of Central Africa, now known as the Africa Museum, which was built under the reign of King Leopold II in order to glorify the "Congo project". Belgium is host to an important African community whose presence originated with the country's colonial history in central Africa. The majority are from Congo and Rwanda. In addition, Belgium's industries, central positioning in Europe, and the recent refugee crisis have created other successive waves of migration.

In 2015, the UN launched the International Decade for People of African Descent in a call for member states to undertake actions designed to foster recognition, justice and development in

favour of its populations of African descent.[5] In Belgium, however, Foreign Ministry officials did not launch this decade until June 2019, after the UN had published a critical preliminary report on the way Belgium treats its population of African descent and its colonial history legacy.[6]

d.   Racism and Discrimination

Racism and discrimination continue to be an urgent problem in Belgium and are perceived to have become worse in recent years. People with a migration background face discrimination in all spheres, but mostly in education, housing and employment. Furthermore, xenophobic and racist speech have become a daily reality, since right-wing populist parties have gained in popularity and are very active on social media.[7]

The people most affected by these developments are those with an African migration background. In 2017, a study by the King Baudouin Foundation revealed the particular difficulties that afro-descendants face in the country, including, in particular, a lower than average level of access to the labour market, despite higher levels of education for first-generation migrants, and higher than average rates of unemployment for second-generation migrants. The same research has also shown that 80% of afro-descendants have experienced discrimination in the country, 77% of which was due to the colour of their skin.[8]

The first public policy to fight against racism and discrimination emerged in the 1990s. In 1993, the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism was created to fight discrimination and promote equal opportunities, and to ensure the fundamental rights of foreigners, stimulate the fight against human trafficking, and inform governments about the nature and extent of migration flows. In 2013, the Centre would become an inter-federal institution, and from 2015 on all issues related

to migration would be addressed by the new Federal Migration Centre, Myria. In 2016, the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism was renamed Unia. Over the years, its duties have ceased to deal exclusively with racial issues, but have also addressed other forms of discrimination.[9]

The centre suffered setbacks, however, in April 2017, when two high-level members of staff were fired by members of the Flemish nationalist party, the N-VA.[10] The incidents generated protest, with open letters demanding a revision of the decisions, though ultimately without success. The *Minderhedenforum* (Minorities Forum), the umbrella organisation representing ethno-cultural associations in Flanders and Brussels, also expressed its concerns in an open letter. At the time of writing this publication, the future of the *Minderhedenforum* and Unia are both in limbo, since the same party, the N-VA, has threatened to dismantle the first, and has confirmed the new Flemish government will step out the latter.[11] As the *Minderhedenforum* wrote: "There is a perception within our community that critical opinions, especially when discussing diversity or equal opportunities, are very easily disqualified or even silenced. This tendency is a matter of great concern because *Minderhedenforum* believes that citizens should fulfil an active, critical role in society and that the interaction of diverse and critical opinions contributes to more nuance and a societal equilibrium".[12]

This form of alienation, or *othering* is very present in the Belgian community and it is still often believed to be unlinked to racism. This can be felt in the media, in the language, in the lack of representation, and in the debate on *Zwarte Piet* (Black Pete).[13] Moreover, discussing racism is still largely taboo in Belgian society and tends to generate emotional and offended reactions.[14] As Rutazibwa explains, we need to surpass the

taboo, as naming the processes that construct racial inequality is a necessary part of stopping it.[15] This taboo also covers the use of the word "race", mostly in the Francophone community (both in Belgium and in France).[16] The taboo, or denial, also affects surveys: it is illegal for public authorities to collect demographic data along racial or ethnic lines in Belgium, and while proactive measures such as "field tests", or *praktijktesten* might be able to identify discriminating organisations or landlords in order to tackle the problem in the housing and labour markets, they are contested by the leading nationalist party.[17] At the heart of the matter lies the methodological paradox faced by the team behind this project: identifying and surveying the "other" in order to assess prevalent "othering" practices (see the contribution by Jonas Tinius in the current publication).

e.   Activism

A number of grassroots, non-profit organisations have emerged to address the problems not dealt with by governmental institutions. In recent years, the landscape of associations led by artists, activists, social workers and academics of African descent has significantly grown and diversified in Belgium. These independent actors address the slowness of institutional measures by independently tackling a range of topics, such as racism and discrimination, colonial history in school curricula and the public space, representation on the artistic scenes, in cinemas, and within the cultural institutions and the media, restitution, the teaching of African history, etc.

f.   Diversity and Cultural Policy

Because culture falls within the mandates of the communities (and not the federal government), and because diversity is in part associated with culture, legal measures promoting diversity in Belgium exist at various levels.

In Flanders, a decree for an (ethno-) cultural diversity policy was approved in 1998. So far, the Flemish government focuses on "interculturalisation" and defines this as "a constant process of tuning organisational structures, personnel & services offered to the ethno-cultural diversified society". This is considered "more than a passive tolerance for ethnic-cultural diversity; it is a policy that is capable of actively supporting and stimulating heterogeneity". According to this policy, cultural houses with Flemish government funding are expected to declare a clear position on interculturality and implement an action programme. It has become one of the evaluation criteria in the assessment of projects and structures. However, not only is it unclear how the new Flemish government will define this, but, as we will discuss later, such policies have not always been put into practice.[18]

In the French-speaking community, cultural diversity policy is organised around communities of ethno-cultural minorities. Cultural operators represent these minority groups and have access to various types of support provided by decrees and regulations, though not without difficulty. Mechanisms are developing gradually, especially in the form of calls for projects. These cultural actors or associations often focus on the development and the expression or defence of the rights of marginalised populations. In the German-speaking part, policies differ in each borough.[19]

At the federal level, the Belgian state started working on the stimulation of diversity in the middle of the 2000s, under the impetus of European guidelines. In 2005, the Federal Public Services held a meeting called "Network Diversity", which resulted in the creation of the "Network of Federal Diversity". In 2014 a Diversity Steering Group was launched. The official diversity policy would focus on people with disabilities,

people with a migration background, and gender equality. Since 2013, the Federal Government has organised an annual Federal Day of Diversity, with a specific focus each year, such as "disability", "cultural diversity", and "poverty".

Dr. Ouali observed how diversity became an important factor in marketing.[20] In Flanders, cultural diversity is considered a "strategic objective as a catalyst for innovation".[21] Yet in 2019, one can perceive how the cultural sector is still predominantly White.

In 2015, the European pilot research on migrant's cultural participation, MCP Broker, proved the need for more effort in cultural institutions in Belgium in order to reflect the diversity of their societies. Most progress was to be made among the staff.[22] This was the starting point for the *Dis-Othering* project as a whole and its *Mapping Diversities* research component in particular.

REFERENCES

http://statistics.brussels/figures/did-you-know/how-many-
    different-nationalities-live-in-brussels#.XTgbey2iHMI
https://stadincijfers.antwerpen.be/Databank/Jive/?workspace_
    guid=106f6e06-b2b6-455a-bce9-5987a2d58c7e
https://statbel.fgov.be/en/themes/population/structure-
    population
https://statbel.fgov.be/en/themes/population/structure-
    population#figures
https://www.demorgen.be/politiek/verkiezingen-2019-alle-
    uitslagen-in-kaart-b2a7fe52/
https://www.facebook.com/Daily-Racism-406742619487273/
https://www.knack.be/nieuws/belgie/unia-ontslaat-rachida-
    lamrabet-na-controversieel-interview/article-
    normal-835647.html
https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/belgium-country-
    permanent-immigration
https://www.minderhedenforum.be/wie-zijn-wij
https://www.populationpyramid.net/nl/bevolkingsdichtheid/
    belgië/2018/
https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20150323_01593585
Martiniello, M., Khader, B., Rea, A., Timmerman, C.,
    Immigratie en integratie anders denken: Een Belgisch
    interuniversitair initiatief, Bruylant, 2006, Brussels.
Olivia Umurerwa Rutazibwa (2016) "From the Everyday to
    IR: In Defence of the Strategic Use of the R-word",
    Postcolonial Studies, 19:2, pp. 191–200, DOI:10.1080/136
    88790.2016.1254016
www.federaldiversity.be
www.unia.be
King Baudouin Foundation, 2017, Burgers met Afrikaanse roots:
    een portret van Congolese, Rwandese en Burundese
    Belgen.
https://www.demorgen.be/politiek/vlaanderen-stapt-uit-unia-
    topvrouw-reageert-belangrijk-dat-vlaamse-burger-even-
    goed-beschermd-blijft-b8c751af/

II. FINDINGS

a.   Finding cooperative institutions
In Belgium, the *Mapping Diversities* research component of the *Dis-Othering* project aimed to survey a total of 15 institutions in the cities of Brussels, Antwerp (in the Dutch-speaking region) and Liège (in the French-speaking region). In the end, only 8 institutions participated, generating live interviews with each institution gatekeeper, as well as 45 individually completed online surveys from the decision-making staff of these institutions. The data and commentaries shared in this section below come from these interviews and surveys.

b.   Apprehending "Diversity" at the Institution Level
The word diversity is understood in divergent ways among the different stakeholders. Within the cultural institutions, too, it has different definitions, and it takes on different roles and levels of importance within the institutions' missions.
Most surveyed institutions note that diversity is very important to their institution, and very often their mission includes notions referring to diversity or other societal-related goals. The majority formulate these goals in other words, focusing on terms such as: openness, multi-perspectivity, polyphony, inclusiveness, accessibility, connection, and consciousness.

"Diversity is a core value (to our institution). There are 178 nationalities in our city, which we would preferably all address. Actually we call it *multi-perspectivity or polyphony*. The personnel policy on the other hand is more complicated. 50% of employees have a migration background. It is especially diverse in gender and religion. But if you zoom in, you'll see that diversity mainly exists in the lower paid teams." — General Director, Flanders, 02/04/2019

"I always try to talk about inclusiveness rather than diversity. [...] And that is actually very simple: we have to be a reflection of the society, or the city we live in, in everything we do. That means: we have to be a reflection in our personnel database, volunteer database, and our programming has to be able to appeal to everyone in the city. (...) To me this is about relevance. I am convinced of the fact that if cultural houses will not adapt themselves, then they lose relevance over the following ten years." — General Director, Flanders, 04/07/2019

"Diversity is a key word that should be part of the mentality of the personnel, the public and the artists." — General Director, Flanders, 12/03/2019

However, despite these articulated values, almost all of the participating institutions (with two exceptions) seem to lack a clear diversity policy that covers "all three Ps": Public, Programmes, and Personnel. For most of the institutions, the theory of the mission has not been structurally translated into concrete measures or actions. This divergence is sometimes even recognised by the institutions themselves.

"Diversity is inherent to our mission, it is reflected in our activities, and multi-disciplinarity. However, when put into practice, the reality is often different." — Director of Human Resources, Brussels, 14/12/2019

c.   Diversity, Representation and Internationalisation
Most institutional missions put forth the international character of the cultural houses. Many participating institutions have a note on international collaboration, international connectivity, or strive for an international reputation. For these, a link is easily made between diversity and international character, but less so with the diversity of the country itself, at a national level.

c. Public and Programming

All of the participating institutions note that many things have changed for them at the level of their public and programming over the course of the past ten years, and especially in the last five. We can indeed see that on a federal level, the topic of diversity has been an important issue since the early 2000s (in 2000, 2004, and with the launch of the Diversity Steering Group in 2014), and since 2015 we have been witnessing a "new" wave of migration, the tensions around which have featured prominently in programming.

While most of the institutions do not structurally collect data about their audience, and none of them collects data on the racial or religious background of their audience, all of the interviewees state that they have witnessed an evolution among their audiences in the past ten years. The majority of the respondents find that their institution's programming attracts a diverse audience (15 respondents rate this as highly as 8/10, and 10 at 7/10). However, these are based on individual subjective observations and most add that there is still a lot of progress to be made. 28 out of 45 respondents find that their institution is not representative of the city. Whereas some aim to attract everyone in and around the city, others believe that it is impossible to have a full representation of the city in their audience.

"… and our programming should attract everybody in the city. Not every evening has to be interesting to everybody, but there should be enough in what we offer that every *Antwerpenaar* or person from around the city of Antwerp should find his or her taste. So that the classical senior person, or someone with an Iranian background or a Moroccan background can feel at home." — General Director, Flanders, 04/07/2019

"Our wish is to become more representative, not 100% representative. Because there are more than 180 nationalities in Brussels, we cannot have all of them in the audience." — General Director, Brussels, 14/03/2019

"There are still many people who won't come – not everyone is interested in culture." — Staff member, Antwerp, 04/07/2019

It is worth noting how enthusiastic and proud most institutions are of their programming. 35 respondents state that they develop programming in partnership with representatives from the diverse communities in their city. In Flanders, in Brussels and in Wallonia, cultural houses experiment by collaborating with local, grassroots organisations, by soliciting the expertise of local influencers from a migrant background (ambassadors), collaborating with local schools, and engaging in international collaborations… These collaborations range from the co-creation of exhibitions, to preparing youngsters for higher studies in the arts through accessible courses, and translating theatrical plays into the language of children in less-privileged schools. Some collaborations and methodologies offer proof of sustainable capacity and seem to have already resulted in a more diverse public (according to the observations of the interviewees). Others are rather short-term and attract a new public for only a short period.

"(The institution) brings stories from the city… and that works well. In this way it is also a little about sharing power. It is important to let others fill it (the content) in." — Staff member, Antwerp

The term "target groups" is still used by the majority of institutions, especially when depicting the "target group" that is most difficult to attract. Other institutions try not to categorise. One institution, for example, uses the educational style of KOLB, which makes it possible to work on inclusivity without ethnically categorising the audiences (the categories used are: thinker, doer, dreamer, and decider). The "traditional audience", on the other hand, is in most cases described as White, highly educated and older than 30. These audiences ensure the institution's financial stability, which can in turn enable the institution to experiment with other new audiences (offering less financial stability). Institutions that receive less financial support from the state rely on these "traditional audiences". In these cases, the programming is adapted only to a small extent. Others take more risks:

"Sometimes you have to dare to programme something very specific towards a target group, so that the latter can discover the house, hoping that they are inspired to come again and see more things." — General Director, Antwerp, 04/07/2019

In order to attract a diverse audience, all institutions make use of social media, which in some cases is very successful. Here, too, influencers with a migration background are solicited to attract their followers into the cultural institutions.

17 respondents state that subventions are conditional on the diversity in the institution. However, this is not binding. Even in the case where it is explicitly conditional, this is sometimes merely confirmed as a statement on paper. One institution member even stated that for two years she had never been asked to write a foreseen report about this aspect. In many cases, staff members are not aware of such conditions: 14 respondents stated that they don't know. 11 respondents said that there are no conditions. European projects, on the other hand, seem to have more impact, as they expect more societal effort.

d. Personnel

Despite the enthusiasm that goes along with recent projects, and the evolution that can be seen in the public and programming projects, very little seems to change at the level of the personnel. This can also be seen in the profiles of the respondents to the survey. The majority of the respondents were White, atheist, heterosexual, highly educated, and between 35 and 54 years old.

Only 5 of the 45 respondents stated having a migration background (meaning that at least one of the parents has another first nationality than that of the country the person lives in), of which only 1 indicated a non-European migration background. At the level of gender, the institutions performed better: 22 of the 45 survey respondents and 3 of the 8 interviewees were women. In terms of religion or conviction, 27 respondents declared themselves atheist, 9 as Christian, 5 as agnostic, and with 3 preferring not to say. 1 respondent claims to believe in Christian values, but does not want to be labelled as religious.

20 of the 45 respondents find that the team of decision-making staff at their institution is "not diverse at all". A majority of 22 respondents finds the team "a little diverse", with only 3 respondents finding the team of decision-making staff "very diverse". Of the respondents who found the team a little or very diverse, 3 commented that this diversity can be found at the level of gender, and only 1 person commented that "some people are from non-Belgian-origin (German/Czech)", yet European.

A quite different outcome can be seen when the question touches upon the staff in general. 32 respondents then find that the staff is "a little diverse", whereas only 5 respondents find it "not diverse at all", and 8 respondents find the staff

"very diverse". An explanation for this divergence with the latter question can easily be found in the comments. One can read that diversity is especially present in lower-paid functions, such as guards, cleaning staff and young volunteers. "The higher you go into artistic programming and hierarchy, the less diverse it gets." Here, by contrast, several respondents witness this diversity in terms that concern gender, nationality, race and sexual orientation. While all institutions claim that they would like to have a more diverse staff, 6 out of the 8 participating institutions are not applying concrete measures in order to create the change. Most of them also express not to know why the team is so lacking in diversity and how to change this. Also, at this level, the majority of the institutions lack a concrete diversity personnel policy. Whereas several institutions state that they pay "particular attention" to hiring people with a migrant background and to keeping the gender balance right, and whereas almost all of the institutions have missions revolving around notions such as openness, tolerance and inclusiveness, only 2 institutions noted having clear criteria (gender) in hiring procedures, and one institution stated that they filled one in two vacancies with a candidate from a migration background, though breaking the procedures to do so.

"I can't pinpoint why our team is so lacking in diversity." – General Director, Flanders, 02/04/2019

"It is hard, I don't have the right tools. And then quotas are not allowed." – General Director, Wallonia, 07/02/2019

For some institutions, the selection of new staff depends on the city's administration. Sometimes, this includes deliberate measures to exclude discrimination. The selection procedure of Antwerp, for example, anonymises the candidate in the application procedure. At the same time, the same administration from the city of Antwerp does not allow women to wear the veil in public positions (at the reception, in direct contact with the public, though this can be ignored when the position is instead at a desk and not required to have direct contact with the public of the institution).
For some institutions, the focus on internationalism seems to blind them to the diversity that can be found close-by.
As previously mentioned, most institutions lack a clear, explicit, serious diversity policy. It is clear that an open mentality or accessibility does not suffice in assuring diversity at the level of (decision-making) personnel. One general problem is the failure to take into account the racism and discrimination present throughout our society, which causes different forms of imbalance on an economic, educational, and a social level…

e.   Glass Ceiling, Positive Discrimination and the Fear of Quotas

In Belgium there has been a lack of research on the glass ceiling in the cultural sector, in contrast with the academic world, politics, and the business world.[23] When one becomes aware of the presence of White privilege and inequality in our society, one would understand that "positive discrimination" is merely a tool to straighten what is skewed in our society. In other words,

not discriminating or having the philosophy of an open mind in a cultural house is not enough to attract and become a safe space for people of colour. What is needed is an explicit policy, a system to grant access to the sector.

"If you want to achieve it (a diverse team), you just have to, you have to *de facto* apply a system of quotas. If you are working with a target figure and you want to achieve that target figure, then you have to break the procedure. The candidates don't fall out of thin air." – General Director, Flanders, 04/07/2019

Setting racial quota in order to guarantee access to the sector for people with a migrant background is legally not allowed in Belgium. Nevertheless the majority of the respondents think that diversity quotas or targets should be installed within their institution at the level of public (30), programming (33) and personnel (35). The other respondents don't believe quotas could resolve the problem. The most commonly occurring arguments concern the fear for a loss of quality and qualifications.

Several respondents and interviewees state that they believe more in targets than in quotas, fearing the enforced character of quotas. Interestingly enough, the fear of quotas or positive discrimination ensuring the presence of workers with a migrant background is still present, whereas gender quotas, installed in the legislation as a result of the feminist movement, are not questioned. Yet it is precisely the enforcing character that led to successful results: between 2008 and 2017, the number of women in business steering committees has more than doubled (from 8.2% to 26.8%).[24] So if gender quotas as a result of the feminist movement prove to have an impact on female representation in business, why can cultural diversity quotas not be installed to ensure the representation of people with a migration background?

f.   Initiatives extra muros

Certain initiatives have emerged in Flanders, Brussels and The Netherlands. These are important initiatives that urge for change by motivating cultural workers to reflect on their methodology and epistemology. A few examples include Scan & DO (a three-year trajectory to coach an institution in being more inclusive), Allyens (a marketing office looking for employees with a migration background), LINC (training to become a more inclusive cultural worker), Words Matter (a publication by the Tropen Museum in the Netherlands on inclusive language in the cultural sector), and the Actiris diversity plan. This list of initiatives was mentioned during the interviews, and is not exhaustive.

REFERENCES

Fischer, A., Rojahn, K., and Struyk, I., *Het glazen plafond in de culturele sector. Feiten en verklaringen*. Amsterdam, 2002.
Thompson, L., "Onderwijs kan een pad zijn naar sociale rechtvaardigheid maar kan ook bestaande ongelijkheden vergroten", Mondial Nieuws, 16 July 2019.
OECD (2018), "The resilience of students with an immigrant background: Factors that shape well-being", OECD Publishing, Paris. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264292093-en
Hippe, R. and Jakubowski, M. (2018). Immigrant background and expected early school leaving in Europe: evidence from PISA; EUR 28866 EN; Publications Office of the European Union; Luxembourg; ISBN 978-92-79-76328-1; doi:10.2760/111445; JRC109065
Instituut voor de gelijkheid van vrouwen en mannen, "De derde balans van de wet van 28 juli 2011 over genderquota in raden van bestuur", 26 November 2018.
https://rosavzw.be/site/kwesties/vrouwen-ad-top/wetgeving

1   https://www.populationpyramid.net/nl/
    bevolkingsdichtheid/belgië/2018/
    https://statbel.fgov.be/en/themes/population/structure-
    population#figures
2   http://statistics.brussels/figures/did-you-know/how-many-
    different-nationalities-live-in-brussels#.XTgbey2iHMI
3   Geldof, D., presentation 15/03/2018; Vertovec, S. (2007),
    "Super-diversity and its Implications", *Ethnic and Racial
    Studies*, 30:6, 1024–1054,
    https://www.standaard.be/cnt/df20190225_04206149?
    articlehash=268B06141F8C2C7261C8AC37DA
    54F2948A0FD35DEC2E29FD5568E7CFE48BD3AC
    793CAEE3D108160EE99625BBCF258191BCCBB
    431320566C1A2D6A537ABADBC
4   https://www.demorgen.be/politiek/verkiezingen-2019-alle-
    uitslagen-in-kaart-b2a7fe52/
5   https://www.un.org/en/events/africandescentdecade/
6   https://www.vrt.be/vrtnws/en/2019/02/12/un-experts-
    belgium-should-apologise-for-its-colonial-past/
7   https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-
    against-racism-and-intolerance/-/hate-speech-and-
    xenophobic-populism-remained-major-concerns-in-
    europe-in-2018
    https://www.bruzz.be/videoreeks/maandag-27-mei-2019/
    video-social-media-expert-vlaams-belang-heeft-veel-
    geinvesteerd
8   While 80% stated that they had experienced
    discrimination, 90% believed that people were
    experiencing discrimination within Belgium. This difference
    might be the result of refusing to be portrayed as a victim,
    yet recognising the problem in general. Retrieved from
    the research conducted by the King Baudouin Foundation
    in 2017: "Burgers met Afrikaanse roots: een portret van
    Congolese, Rwandese en Burundese Belgen".
9   https://www.unia.be/nl/over-unia
10 https://www.knack.be/nieuws/belgie/unia-ontslaat-
    rachida-lamrabet-na-controversieel-interview/article-
    normal-835647.html
    https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20170331_02810323
11 https://www.demorgen.be/politiek/vlaanderen-stapt-uit-
    unia-topvrouw-reageert-belangrijk-dat-vlaamse-burger-
    even-goed-beschermd-blijft-b8c751af/
12 https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20170403_02814833
13 The word *"allochtoon"* was (and is) often used to talk about
    ethnic minorities, though it officially signifies any person
    with a migrant background. It was barely used, however,
    when depicting a White person with a migrant background.
    Due to the racist character the word had gained,
    institutions like the administration of the city of Ghent
    and the newspaper DeMorgen decided to ban its use (Van
    den Broek, A., "Ghent schrapt het woord allochtoon in *De
    Morgen*", 14 February 2013).
14 Lleshi, B., "Racisme in Vlaanderen is doodgewoon",
    07/06/14, *De Standaard*, https://www.knack.be/nieuws/
    belgie/racisme-in-vlaanderen-is-doodgewoon/article-
    opinion-148011.html

15 Olivia Umurerwa Rutazibwa (2016), "From the
    Everyday to IR: In Defence of the Strategic Use of the
    R-word", *Postcolonial Studies*, 19:2, 191–200, DOI:
    10.1080/13688790.2016.1254016
16 https://popula.com/2019/03/19/getting-into-race/
17 https://www.knack.be/nieuws/belgie/wie-discriminatie-
    op-de-huurmarkt-serieus-neemt-moet-werk-maken-van-
    praktijktesten/article-opinion-1201299.html
    http://www.werk.belgie.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=24200
    https://www.knack.be/nieuws/belgie/discriminatie-
    antwerpse-huurmarkt-duchateau-wil-geen-praktijktesten-
    invoeren/article-normal-1201365.htm
18 MCP Broker (2015), *Cultural diversity management in
    European public cultural institutions, Compilation of
    national reports*, pp. 4–5.
19 MCP Broker (2015), *Cultural diversity management in
    European public cultural institutions, Compilation of
    national reports*, pp. 5–6.
20 Ouali, Nourai, 2012, *La diversité: usages et enjeux politiques
    et idéologiques, Conception du dialogue interculturel
    en Wallonie et à Bruxelles*, Communauté française de
    Belgique, Bruxelles, Vol. 16, pp. 63–74.
21 MCP Broker (2015), *Cultural diversity management in
    European public cultural institutions, Compilation of
    national reports*, p. 5.
22 MCP Broker (2015?), *Cultural diversity management in
    European public cultural institutions, Compilation of
    national reports*, pp. 16–18.
23 Rosa vzw, 2004.
24 https://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/nl/nieuws/quota_in_raden_
    van_bestuur_leven_bedrijven_de_wet_na
    Instituut voor de gelijkheid van vrouwen en mannen,
    November 2018

"THE PERSONNEL POLICY [...] IS MORE COMPLICATED. 50% OF OUR EMPLOYEES HAVE A MIGRATION BACKGROUND, BUT IF YOU ZOOM IN, YOU'LL SEE THAT DIVERSITY MAINLY EXISTS IN THE LOWER PAID TEAMS"

from the *Mapping Diversity* interviews or surveys,
comment kept anonymous

"I AM NOT SUPER UP TO DATE WITH THE DISCOURSES ON DECOLONISATION"

"WHAT VOCABULARY IS POLITICALLY CORRECT TODAY TO DISCUSS THIS?"

from the *Mapping Diversity* interviews or surveys,
comment kept anonymous

JONAS TINIUS

Cosmopolitan Anxieties (Introduction)

Throughout its tumultuous modern becoming, Germany has continuously grappled with a history of migration that has affected its cultural institutions. Perhaps most notably, the paradigm of "post-migrant theatre", as coined by the director Shermin Langhoff (2011), addresses the consequences of Germany's post-war invitation of over one million guest workers to aid the devastated German economy. This notion is a provocative concept intended to stir up a conversation about the unrecognised and often discriminated presence of (mostly male) Southern and Eastern European workers, and their children and families. It argues for an understanding of society that does not begin from a notion of rooted nationals and foreigners, but from an idea of society that recognises migration as a foundational element; a society that is beyond migration, and fundamentally constituted by it (see Römhild & Bojadžijev, 2014; Tinius, 2016). Especially in the field of artistic and cultural production, migration has played a central role in the troubling of national narratives of heritage (see Wilmer, 2018; Tinius, 2019). Yet despite years of cultural policies focusing on a variety of concepts to address a more diverse understanding of society – ranging from discredited theories of multiculturalism to superdiversity – the mirroring of Germany's rich migration history in the personnel,

programming, and cultural outreach of cultural institutions lags behind the postulated status of Germany as a diverse, cosmopolitan society (see Marguin & Losekandt, 2017; Vertovec, 2007). Ruth Mandel (2008) even argues that Germany's reactions to post-war Turkish migration and its diaspora echo the difficult heritage of Germany's relation with its internal Jewish "other" (see also Macdonald, 2008). Yet movements of refugees to Germany from 2014 onwards and the impact of conversations around a new "welcome culture" (Bock & Macdonald, 2019) have already prompted prominent analysts of diversity to speak of a "second turning point" for the country, following the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1990 (Vertovec, 2015). While this enthusiasm may have faded, or is, at least, accompanied by the sour taste of resurgent right-wing and xenophobic parties in Germany, it has prompted a broad-ranging reflection on diversity and cultural organisations in times of drastic societal change (see, for example, emerging networks such as the *Post-Heimat* theatre organisation, see PH 2019).

"Migration Background" and Colonial Legacies (Background and Context)

Germany's population at the end of 2018 was estimated to be more than 83 million. This is the first time in the country's history, the Federal Statistical Office notes, that Germany's population has exceeded this threshold (see Destatis, 2019a). The country shares borders with Denmark in the north, Poland and the Czech Republic in the east, Austria and Switzerland in

the south, and France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands to the southwest and west. It is a federal republic with sixteen constituent federal states *(Länder)*, whose biggest cities are Berlin, Hamburg, and Munich (in that order), of which the first two are so-called city-states *(Stadtstaaten)*. Significant matters of public import, such as cultural funding, education, and security are regulated through federal authority.

The majority of the population speaks German, which is also the country's official language. In 2018, according to the Federal Statistical Office, "approximately 20.8 million people in Germany had a migrant background" (Destatis, 2019b). The notion of being *"mit Migrationshintergrund"* that is, "having a migration background", employs a term that has been subject to fierce discussion, offering, for some, a less offensive and less differentiating alternative to the discredited wording of *Ausländer*, or foreigner, but remaining, for others – and in the light of the post-migrant paradigm – a way to mark off and "other" parts of German society (see also Ndikung and Römhild, 2013). The Federal Statistical Office defines a person as being "with migrant background" if "he or she or at least one parent did not acquire German citizenship by birth" (Destatis, 2019b). In 2018, this was the case for one in four people in Germany, amounting to approximately 20.8 million people in 2018 (ibid.). Based on the results of the microcensus, the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) also reports that these 20.8 million people represented an increase of 2.5% in comparison with the year before (2017: 20.3 million).

The nascent Humboldt Forum housed in the rebuilt Prussian city-palace of Germany's capital Berlin has reignited public debate about the country's colonial legacies. As a future location for Berlin's vast ethnological collections (including more than 500,000 objects), many objects of which are under scrutiny for their colonial provenance, it has become a focal point of national debate on Germany's colonial past (see Bose, 2016; Binder, 2009) and it refracts cultural policies on how the country is projecting its cosmopolitan ambitions beyond its capital city (see Tinius & Zinnenburg, 2020). The Humboldt Forum is a prism for conversations on colonial legacies – and their contestation (see DLF, 2018) – the need for diversity work, and cultural policies on discrimination and intersectionality in the arts and cultural organisations; inviting and inciting debates that are directly pertinent to the curatorial research project that has led to this mapping survey (see, for example, Ndikung, 2019; Oswald & Tinius, 2020). Conversations on the decolonisation of institutional logics, calls for systematic research into the provenance of colonial-era collections, and a broader recognition of the intersectionality of discrimination are all interconnected issues when talking about diversity in cultural and artistic organisations.

Mapping Diversity in Germany (an Overview)

The German research team – composed of Lynhan Balatbat-Helbock, Olani Ewuett, Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung, and Antonia Alampi, and organised principally by myself – established during the course of several meetings a list of five cultural and arts organisations in each of the three biggest German cities, namely Berlin, Hamburg, and Munich.[1] In Berlin we contacted museums and exhibition venues for modern and contemporary art (including the Martin Gropius Bau, the Hamburger Bahnhof, the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, and the Kunstwerke KW), as well as theatre and performing arts venues (including the Berliner Festspiele, the Sophiensäle, Ballhaus Naunynstraße, the Maxim Gorki theatre, and the Hebbel am Ufer). In Hamburg, we also reached out to theatre and performing arts venues (including the Thalia and Kampnagel theatres), museums and exhibition venues of art, design, and anthropology (including the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, the Deichtorhallen, and the Museum am Rotenbaum). In Munich, we contacted similar kinds of organisations (among them the Munich Kammerspiele, the Haus der Kunst, the Pinakothek der Moderne, and the Munich Staatsoper). For each of these organisations, the Berlin research team established different routes of invitation, ranging from personal contact, word of mouth, email, and phone conversations. These were sent directly to directors and curators, as well as assistants and secretariats. Despite reminders and several follow-up conversations, only three organisations in Berlin, two in Hamburg, and one in Munich responded positively to our invitation for an initial gatekeeper interview and a follow-up distribution of the survey.

Following interviews with three organisations in Berlin, one scheduled, but eventually cancelled phone conversation with a Hamburg-based organisation, and a phone interview with a Munich organisation, we distributed surveys via gatekeepers and assistants to be distributed among core decision-making personnel within these organisations. The response rate to the survey link was statistically insignificant, and yielded no quantifiable results that could be analysed with view to meaningful commentary on diversity in these organisations. In part, this was due to the organisations' refusal to participate in the anonymised collection of data, while agreeing to be interviewed for the project.

The conversations conducted with directors, diversity managers, and assistants – not all of whom agreed to be cited, or recorded – yielded, nonetheless, some revealing and stark differences with regard to diversity policies, and conceptions of diversity within cultural and arts organisations.

Qualitative Data (The Interviews)

For the reasons stated above, the review of the survey in the German context will focus on qualitative discussions of diversity conceptions. I will focus here on two selected conversations with institutions who partook in the project, and what they reveal about, as it were, the "diversity of diversity".[2] In particular, I will contrast two starkly different responses in relation to institutional approaches to diversity agendas.

One conversation took place with a large cultural research, event, and exhibition institution in Berlin and was conducted by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung and myself. We began the interview by asking for the gatekeeper's own personal view on the issue of diversity, and in a subsequent question, for the view of "their" institution. Beginning with an open question, we had agreed in the research teams, might reveal the difference between the rhetorical performance of the gatekeepers and their actual policies, which we intended to move on to at a later stage in the conversation. Not unexpectedly, our interlocutor responded that "diversity" is not a neutral concept, suggesting that:

"Usually, two dominant positions prevail when institutions think about diversity: classic universalism, which is often nothing other than an unreflected Eurocentrism, or a complete relativism."

The former, our interlocutor suggested, would reject ideas of explicit diversity policies on the assumption that "we are all equal", an assumed positing of similarity that would render diversity work redundant. The latter proposal referred to approaches to diversity that would require each and every kind of difference to be taken into account without discrimination of significance or hierarchy between them. The institution represented and directed by

our interviewee, however, sought to reflect on "the transformation of societies, and the different ways in which they are affected by, for example, technological or economic change". The task for a cultural institution, then, would be to develop responses and perspectives to these kinds of transformations that would be "relevant". Not every perspective or approach – by which our interlocutor was referring to the level of programming, but also to human resources (employment, positions in projects, etc.) – was equally relevant. "Not everything is possible" *(nicht alles geht)*, is how it was put to us. Throughout the interview it was noteworthy that our interlocutor slipped from using the term "diversity" to "complexity", suggesting variously that the issue at stake was not to fill relevant positions with diverse personnel, or to create a diverse programme *irrespective* of the pertinent issues presently facing societies around the world. Rather, the matter was to produce programming and to reach out to people that have "relevant" experiences: "We just tried to get the best and most relevant people", I wrote down several times during our conversation. For this reason, it was argued that "quotas" are not helpful from this point of view, but, equally, that fixed markers such as educational background or other formal qualifications would also not be decisive or exclusive criteria for inclusion or exclusion.

We structured our interview loosely around "the Three Ps" already mentioned – Personnel, Programming, and Public – and closed our interview with questions on outreach and audiences. Regarding the latter two, outreach and audiences, our interviewee described that their institution followed a strategy of "outreach through institutional partnership", that is, through connections to sectors of the public made via collaborating and partner institutions. Or, to put it in their words: "The complexity, I mean, diversity, of our programme is brought to us through our institutional partners and their audiences". This also implied that there are no particular audiences, demographic groups, or city populations that are particularly addressed, or particularly sought for inclusion; and the slippage from diversity to complexity suggests a thinking less along the lines of markers of cultural, social, gender, religious, or ethnic identity-formation, but one more focused on a broad range of technical expertise. "For us, programming comes first, and our audience depends on the programme – it is different for each project", our interlocutor concluded, emphasising again an understanding of diversity as secondary with regard to questions of competence, expertise, and the type of problem at hand.

The second interview that I would like to discuss in comparison took place via telephone with a major public theatre and performance institution in Munich. By contrast to the interview conducted with the Berlin director, this one took place via Skype and was conducted by me alone. The interview, moreover, was facilitated through an assistant in the theatre who was working on diversity, education, and migration within the institution; a position financed on a longer-term basis and thus structurally integrated into the institution, already offering an alternative to the often short-term and precarious positions created for diversity work. The interview began with a similar question about the conception of diversity by the gatekeeper and their institution, but was promptly responded to with a starkly different response: "Our conception is similar to the logic of a neighbourhood pub: behind the bar is the same as in front of the bar". By that, the interlocutor and their colleague suggested that the institution needs to directly conduct research on the make-up of the city population and work to reflect that make-up in its personnel and programming: "First, we need a relentless description of the status quo *[erbarmungslose Zustandsbeschreibung]*: with whom are we dealing in this city?" Interestingly, and perhaps unexpectedly for me, this included not just an awareness of statistics about migration and population demographics, but also an awareness "of the racist sections of our city population – we are dealing with a structurally racist institution and group of regular audience members, which we need to confront". Against this backdrop, "we are seeking to confront and challenge ourselves, not just with quotas, but also with the inclusion of multiple working languages". In other words, the institution operated on a radically different understanding and implementation of diversity agendas than was the case in the first interview I discussed: rather than understanding diversity as an issue of relevance and acute problems of complexity, it was addressed as a task through which the institution was required to engage with its own shortcomings regarding diversity, discrimination, and racism. Moreover, diversity agendas and diversity work were understood as a form of challenge, both to the institution, but also to its funders and partner institutions: "we seek to be insistent and pushy *[penetrant]* with ourselves and our funders so that we can, ideally, operate as a model for other institutions that face the same challenges".

Analysis and Discussion

The quantitative data response was too low and incomplete to merit a proper analysis and significant statistical evaluation. In light of this, it is worth noting a discrepancy that has been revealed in similar ways across the contexts of the two other countries: between, on the one hand, the desire and willingness to support diversity surveys and examinations of cultural organisations' responsibility, and, on the other, the reluctance to partake and make an effort to set this diversity work into practice. Oftentimes, intellectual or ethical arguments (complexity vs. diversity, or safeguarding of data) were mobilised in order to defend the non-forwarding of the quantitative survey. From the conversations we managed to conduct, it was strikingly obvious that the institutions that had committed to longer-term positions dedicated to diversity and against discrimination, or even shorter-term workshops, awareness seminars, or "diversity fellows", were more willing to engage in conversations than those that had not done so. As we discuss in our joint introduction to the *Mapping Diversity* project, a foundational problem arose from the misunderstanding between diversity as a normative policy and diversity as a political commitment; the former was often rejected, and not seldom mentioned in conjunction with quotas, on the grounds of being too stiff to correspond to either the thematic plans for an organisation, or discriminating positively and thus creating token positions. The latter was almost unanimously considered a good thing, even though just what diversity was – and how one could be politically committed to it – varied greatly, shifting from categorised ideas of gender-based equality, to the inclusion of People of Colour, to a general idea of diverse "perspectives" and theoretical outlook.

Binder, Beate, *Streitfall Stadtmitte. Der Berliner Schlossplatz*. Cologne: Böhlau, 2009.

Bock, Jan-Jonathan and Sharon Macdonald (eds.), *Refugees Welcome? Differences and Diversity in a Changing Germany*. Oxford/New York: Berghahn Books, 2019.

Bose, Friedrich von, *Das Humboldt-Forum. Eine Ethnographie seiner Planung*. Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos, 2016.

Destatis, 2019a. "Press release No. 244 of 27 June 2019". https://www.destatis.de/EN/Press/2019/06/PE19_244_12411.html (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

Destatis 2019b. "Press release No. 314 of 21 August 2019". https://www.destatis.de/EN/Press/2019/08/PE19_314_12511.html (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

DLF 2018. "'Ich lehne diese Argumentation der Gleichsetzerei ab'. Bredekamp widerspricht Savoys Empfehlungen". *Deutschland Funk Kultur*. Archiv, 26 November 2018. https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/bredekamp-widerspricht-savoys-empfehlungen-ich-lehne-diese.1013.de.html?dram:article_id=434280 (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

Langhoff, Shermin, "Die Herkunft spielt keine Rolle: 'Postmigrantisches Theater' im Ballhaus Naunynstraße", interview with Shermin Langhoff, *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, 10 March 2011. Retrieved 4 December 2019 from http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/bildung/kulturelle-bildung/60135/interview-mit-shermin-langhoff?p=all

Macdonald, Sharon, *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond*. New York and London: Routledge, 2008.

Mandel, Ruth, *Cosmopolitan Anxieties. Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*. Duke: Duke University Press, 2008.

Marguin, Séverine & Tobias Losekandt, *Studie zum Berliner Arbeitsmarkt der Kultur- und Kreativsektoren*. Berlin: Bildungswerk Berlin der Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, 2017.

Ndikung, Bonaventure Soh Bejeng, *Those who are dead are not ever gone. On the Maintenance of Supremacy, the Ethnological Museum and the Intricacies of the Humboldt Forum (Pamphlet 1)*. Berlin/Dakar/Milan: Archive Books, 2019.

Ndikung, Bonaventure Soh Bejeng and Regina Römhildt. 2013. 'The Post-Other as Avant-Garde', in: Daniel Baker and Maria Hlavajova. Eds. We Roma: A Critical Reader in Contemporary Art. Amsterdam: Valiz, pp. 206-225.

Oswald, Margareta von, & Jonas Tinius, "Across Anthropology (Introduction)", in *Across Anthropology. Troubling Colonial Legacies, Museums, and the Curatorial*. Leuvern: Leuven University Press, 2020.

Post-Heimat Network. *Production Network for Migration, Refugees, and Theatre*. Funded by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes. https://outoftheblackbox.co.uk/portfolio/post-heimat-german-refugee-theatre/ (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

Römhild, Regina & Manuela Bojadžijev, "Was kommt nach dem 'transnational turn'? Perspektiven für eine kritische Migrationsforschung", *Berliner Blätter. Ethnographische und Ethnologische Beiträge* 65, 2014, pp. 10–24.

Tinius, Jonas, "Authenticity and Otherness: Reflecting State(lessness) in German Postmigrant Theatre", *Critical Stages/Scènes Critiques* 14, 2016.

''Interstitial Agents: Negotiating Migration and Diversity in Theatre', in Jan-Jonathan Bock & Sharon Macdonald (eds.), *Refugees Welcome? Differences and Diversity in a Changing Germany*. Oxford/New York: Berghahn Books, 2019, pp. 241–264.

Vertovec, Steven, "Super-Diversity and its Implications', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30 (6), 2007, pp. 1024–1054.

"Germany's Second Turning Point: Long-Term Effects of the Refugee Crisis", *openDemocracy,* published 30 September 2015. https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/germanys-second-turning-point-long-term-effects-of-refugee-crisi/ (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

Von Zinnenburg Carroll, Khadija & Jonas Tinius, "Phantom Palaces: Prussian Centralities and Humboldtian Horizontalities in the Centre of Berlin" (with Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll), in Jonathan Bach & and Michal Murawski (eds.), *The (City) Centre Cannot Hold? New Monumentality, Neo-Modernity, and Zombie Urban Utopias*. London: UCL Press, 2020.

Wilmer, S.E., "The Institutional Response of the German Theatre", in *Performing Statelessness in Europe*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 189–208.

Destatis, 2019a. "Press release No. 244 of 27 June 2019". https://www.destatis.de/EN/Press/2019/06/PE19_244_12411.html (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

Destatis 2019b. "Press release No. 314 of 21 August 2019". https://www.destatis.de/EN/Press/2019/08/PE19_314_12511.html (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

DLF 2018. "'Ich lehne diese Argumentation der Gleichsetzerei ab'. Bredekamp widerspricht Savoys Empfehlungen". *Deutschland Funk Kultur*. Archiv, 26 November 2018. https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/bredekamp-widerspricht-savoys-empfehlungen-ich-lehne-diese.1013.de.html?dram:article_id=434280 (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

Langhoff, Shermin, "Die Herkunft spielt keine Rolle: 'Postmigrantisches Theater' im Ballhaus Naunynstraße", interview with Shermin Langhoff, *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung,* 10 March 2011. Retrieved 4 December 2019 from http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/bildung/kulturelle-bildung/60135/interview-mit-shermin-langhoff?p=all

Post-Heimat Network. *Production Network for Migration, Refugees, and Theatre*. Funded by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes. https://outoftheblackbox.co.uk/portfolio/post-heimat-german-refugee-theatre/ (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

"Germany's Second Turning Point: Long-Term Effects of the Refugee Crisis", *openDemocracy*, published 30 September 2015. https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/germanys-second-turning-point-long-term-effects-of-refugee-crisi/ (last accessed, 4 December 2019).

NOTES

1. The research itself formed part of the fieldwork I conducted at the time on processes of curatorial troubling more broadly in Berlin. This was funded by a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage (CARMAH) from the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung, as part of Sharon Macdonald's Alexander von Humboldt Professorship.

2. For reasons of anonymity, I am not mentioning the names of interviewed gatekeepers, the institutions, or the cities. They did agree, in principle, to have their names and institutions appear in this contribution, but to remain in line with the guidelines set by the *Mapping Diversities Survey,* I chose to keep them anonymous.

"...WE SEEK TO BE INSISTENT AND PUSHY WITH OURSELVES AND OUR FUNDERS SO THAT WE CAN, IDEALLY, OPERATE AS A MODEL FOR OTHER INSTITUTIONS THAT FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES..."

from the *Mapping Diversity* interviews or surveys,
comment kept anonymous

DIS-OTHERING ONLINE SURVEY
EXTRACTED TELLING DATA FROM DECISION-MAKING
PERSONNEL AT 18 INSTITUTIONS IN AUSTRIA, BELGIUM
AND GERMANY

	Austria	Belgium	Germany
Country's Population	9 mio	11 mio	83 mio
Country's population with migration background	1,7 mio	2,7 mio	21 mio
Cities chosen for survey	Vienna Linz Graz	Brussels Antwerp Liège	Berlin Hamburg Frankfurt
Total number of institutions contacted (53)	15	20	18
Total number of responsive institutions (18)	4	8	6
Total number of completed individual surveys received	17	45	2
% of respondents who feel their institution's decision making team is not at all diverse	50%	44%	n/a*
% of respondents who feel their institution staff in general is not at all diverse	20%	11%	n/a*
% of respondents who feel their institution staff is a little diverse	80%	71%	n/a*
% of respondents who have a migrant background themselves	10%	11%	n/a*
% of respondents who feel their institutional approach does not reflect the diverse make-up of the city	70%	62%	n/a*
% of respondents who know there is not, or who do not know whether there is, an official diversity policy, programme or officer in their institution?	90%	91%	n/a*
% of respondents who think diversity quotas or targets should be set in place for personnel hiring	70%	78%	n/a*
% of respondents who say their institution is not or too little informed about or connected to data and research on diversity in the population of their city.	70%	53%	n/a*

*The German *Mapping Diversities* Research yielded only 2 completed individual surveys, too small a sample to report opinions from.

"... WE NEED A RELENTLESS DESCRIPTION OF THE STATUS QUO: WITH WHOM ARE WE DEALING IN THIS CITY?"

"... PROGRAMMING COMES FIRST, AND OUR AUDIENCE DEPENDS ON THE PROGRAMME"

from the *Mapping Diversity* interviews or surveys,
comment kept anonymous

CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS

CRITICAL
INTERVENTIONS

Troubling Diversity and Iterations of Difference: Reflections on Curatorial Tensions and a Mapping Survey[1]

JONAS TINIUS

The Double Presence of Difference

In recent decades, and notably across a variety of transnational contexts, the notion of "diversity" has captured many of the tensions implicit in former debates on class, nation, race, identity politics, and difference. Damani Partridge and Matthew Chin suggest that we may indeed "use the current discourse on diversity as a lens to think about questions of economic disparity and social justice" (2019, p. 202). By asking "Who benefits from diversity, and who might be forgotten?", they argue that we can productively engage with the different kinds of work that are being done under "diversity" (ibid., pp. 202, 206). Drawing on Sara Ahmed's analyses of the ways in which diversity works in "institutional life" (2012), my research sought to understand the mediating and positioning practices of curators working in Berlin, and the complex means by which they strategically operationalised an anti-racist diversity agenda in order to point to larger issues of institutional exclusion in public cultural institutions. I am describing these practices as a form of "curatorial troubling" of and through "diversity", in which curators sought to "stir up potent responses" (Haraway, 2016, p. 1) to structural forms of exclusion.

This contribution draws on fieldwork conducted as part of a larger multi-researcher project conducted between the middle of 2016 and late 2019 at the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage (see footnote 1) in collaboration with the Berlin-based project space SAVVY Contemporary, among other exhibition-making organisations. SAVVY operated as one of the main initiators of a joint project application with BOZAR, the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels (Belgium) and *Kulturen in Bewegung,* a smaller cultural institution in Vienna (Austria) that I followed as an invited researcher.

Over the course of the application process, the SAVVY curators proposed to reframe the EU-funded project – originally focused on Afropolitanism and Afropean identity – by turning it around and proposing to look instead at the imaginations of Africanness in the institutions that conduct projects on Africa.[2] Once confirmed, the name of the project was changed from *Afropolitan* to *Dis-Othering: Beyond Afropolitan & Other Labels*, thereby indicating in the subtitle the shift within and critique of the notions initially used. Inadvertently, however, the project itself became an example of the work and effects of diversity agendas in European cultural institutions with regard to imaginations of Africa.

In 2017, Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung and the artistic co-director of SAVVY Contemporary, Antonia Alampi, expressed regret about how the inclusion of people of colour in major European cultural institutions was lagging behind the demographic realities of the cities in which these institutions are located, and they made reference in particular to Brussels and Berlin.[3] This echoes what Damani Patridge and Matthew Chin describe as the way in which

53

"diversity has come to mean a sprinkling of colour or the contingent presence of the 'disadvantaged' in otherwise majoritarian 'White' or upper-class/high-caste institutions" (2019, p. 198).

I was invited to join the Scientific Committee of *Mapping Diversity*, one particular quantitative data-gathering sub-project within the larger *Dis-Othering* project, which sought to investigate conceptions and policies regarding diversity in public cultural institutions and arts organisations in Austria, Germany, and Belgium. This survey was conceived by the Berlin curatorial team as an attempt to investigate the same institutional mechanisms that made it possible; or to put it a different way, it was set up to examine the extent to which curatorial projects focusing on diversity (for example, the presence of persons of African descent in shows about Africa curated within European cultural institutions) themselves lack the very diversity that they proclaim to exhibit. As such, however, the survey is caught up in the very problem it seeks to address, namely the reification of markers of difference and diversity, such as race, nation, ethnicity, and gender, through their contestation. How, in other words, can a survey designed to challenge an institution's creation of geographically-bound categories of otherness operate without itself producing these same categories of analysis?

Dis-Othering Survey

Most important for the purposes of understanding how the curatorial concept of dis-othering frames the *Mapping Diversity* survey, Ndikung writes that "dis-othering starts with the recognition of the acts and processes of othering" (2019, p. 5). Ndikung and Alampi's counter-proposal on "Dis-Othering" was thus meant as a critique of institutional "othering" practices, as the current concept reads, of well-intended "conceptual

labels", such as Afropolitan, which ignore the broader context of their deployment and fail to look at "what they actually do and what processes of identity construction they encourage".[4]

Not only was the project meant to reorient the focus from the construction of an "Africa-focused" label – "Afropolitanism" – but it also added a critical reflection on the ways in which institutions and such projects as the one at hand produce difference of this kind.

It became clear that Alampi and Ndikung thought a mapping survey of the actual employment statistics of such large, publicly-funded institutions could add some "hard facts" to the suspicions and assumptions that "marginalised populations" and small-scale critical institutions (alongside their curators and affiliated artists) would continue to provide the main content, while remaining at arm's length to the institution's actual power, which resides with the executive curatorial, programming, or directorial staff.

The survey project intended to provoke a reflection on Whiteness and the lack of diversity in organisations. Part of this was a complex attempt to address what they perceived as an unspoken assumption – especially in artistic or cultural fields – of diversity as a good intention and a label for certain types of temporary projects in a predominantly unchanged institutional landscape.

The precise nature of the design of the survey was already the first point of contention. Long debates ensued as to whether the aim would be to expose the assumed lack of diversity in one institution, or to provide statistical facts about the diversity in another. Over the course of the project it was decided not to even name the organisations in the results.

A further complication arose about the access to organisations, and the further circulation of data. The Scientific Committee

agreed that it would be practically helpful to approach institutions not just via a formal email with the signatures of the project partner directors, but also by seeking the approval of what were called "gatekeepers". These were figures, usually executive or human resources directors, or head curators, who were considered to be the points of access to an institution, and who would most likely be the persons allowing or disqualifying a survey from being sent on to their core decision-making members of staff.

Gatekeeper Interviews

The concern over data was also a point of contention during the interviews themselves. For instance, one institution made it clear to the interviewing team, myself included, that while it was sympathetic to the general aims of the project, we could conduct an interview, but not distribute the survey. The reason for this was that it was not "sufficiently clear" what would happen with the potential outcome of the survey, whether this data might feed back into government-related or other public authorities, or whether it would turn into an artistic project or form of visualisation that might reframe the data in ways beyond the interviewees' control.

The issue at hand was thus not only one of the *managing* of data from diversity surveys, but also the question of mapping itself. As was discussed within the project team during the final conference in May 2019, "mapping" as a term is associated with inherently colonial practices, among them systemic governmental control, but also other forms of knowledge-acquisition projects (such as "geographic information systems"), often targeting marginalised demographics, or biomedical aspects of an entire population (see Rose, 2007).

As the process unfolded and interviews for the survey began, the project's Scientific

Committee decided that it would be helpful to have a steady stream of documentation to accompany its process of deliberation on the survey. It had become evident to most participants that almost every step of the process – from designing to implementing and then analysing the survey – involved a fundamental questioning of the categories by which the survey was constructed, and the purpose it was meant to achieve. In the following paragraphs, I review some of the core issues regarding the marking of difference and how it was negotiated in the survey.

Survey Design

For reasons of usability, each of the three research teams acquired a year-long subscription to the survey software *Surveymonkey*, which allows a fairly straightforward interface for designing a survey with drag-and-drop options (similar to website design software like Weebly or Wordpress), the sharing of surveys across different accounts, and the exporting of data sets in an already-visualised form.

The survey included forty questions, beginning with drop-down-option questions on economic issues, as well as general situating questions, including age, nationality, location of the city, gender, sexual orientation, religious orientation or belief, migration background, and education. These already had an "Other" category, as well as "open boxes" for further specifications. They then moved into a set of broader questions about the diversity of staff, diversity policies, and job criteria, as well as a set of questions that invited participants to give a rating, for example, on "how important is diversity to your institution", or whether one considers oneself "to contribute to the diversity of: a) public/audience, b) programmes/curatorship, or c) personnel". For many of these latter questions, the survey asked for

explanations and specifications, that included open boxes and prompts such as "if yes, why and how?", or "if yes, please elaborate". These were meant to allow for critique and disagreement so as to avoid what the researchers feared might be an implicit bias towards a particular answer in the questions.

Members of the different research teams were caught in a complex negotiation, in particular regarding markers of identity that were considered to be "sensitive", including those directly relevant to possible forms of discrimination, including gender, country of birth, nationality, ethnic background, and sexuality. In addition to "current nationality", for instance, the category of "nationality at birth" was added, so that changes of nationality over time, and migration could be accounted for.

"Ethnic background", however, was a category that remained contentious until the very end, since the category of "ethnicity" was disputed in its relevance and existence, albeit to a lesser extent than the category of race, which was rejected and despite its frequent use in an Anglo-American context, was not considered appropriate for a continental context. It was thus agreed to phrase the question about whether one belongs "to an ethnic minority which is not linked to recent migration" – not avoiding the difficulty of the notion of "ethnos", but specifying it further.

As our discussions and notes on the process reflect, the debates around these categories among team members of the research teams revealed a broader problem with how to tackle diversity. It was evident that the multiplication of differences simply extended the problem of difference by trying to "maximise" differentiation. Yet it also became evident that specifically those categories that were most contentious were also the ones most crucial to team members, suggesting that the core of the

"diversity" problem investigated by the survey – and those that were seen as most acutely relevant to the survey – were actually markers of identity articulated in categories that themselves created discomfort among the team members, including the concepts of "race", "sexuality", or "sexual orientation", for instance, and their translation, or rather their translatability (and indeed their perceived untranslatability, as with the issue of translating the concept of "race" into the German term *Rasse*, which members felt unable to use due to its appropriations under Nazism). To this extent, it showed the non-neutrality of these categories. The issue at hand was thus not just one of recognising a maximum number of diverse options, but just how to deal with ethical and political issues in the strategic creation of difference, such as those intended for the purpose of overcoming precisely this form of discrimination in cultural institutions.

Concluding Thoughts

This survey exercise, which is further detailed in the introduction to the *Mapping Diversity* project, has brought to the fore how curatorial and other initiatives and practices that seek to interrogate the representation of and infrastructures for "greater diversity" within cultural institutions have to work with strategic forms of essentialisation and reifications of difference in order to effect broader infrastructural change, rather than merely representational change.

The terms used in the context of the *Mapping Diversity* project are not "difference", but rather "othering" and "dis-othering". These depart from a particular genealogy of postcolonial theory and thought – including, among others, on Afropeanism – within which the practices of SAVVY Contemporary are to be situated; yet they also mobilise more recent organisational and institutional discourses on

diversity management that echo those of concern for other institutions. "Dis-othering" is a kind of curatorial neologism, and it thus operates as a form and expression of conceptual curatorial troubling that seeks to produce critical thinking about the way in which major hegemonical institutions produce geographically-limited ideas of cultural otherness.

"Diversity" – itself the target of the survey to be conducted within the *Mapping Diversity* sub-project – became the central problem of this survey research. Trying to understand what diversity and diversity-work mean for cultural institutions, and the attempt to interrogate these understandings – as well as the "facts" of employment and programming within the institutions – led to an ambivalent and often contradictory discussion of how we define diversity without running the risk of recreating the categories that the project as a whole seeks to question. The double presence of diversity thus describes how a term that is central to the entire project acts both as the crucial problem to be addressed, as well as the aim of the survey and its project.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahmed, Sara, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012.

Chanders, Sarah, "Why is Brussels so white? The EU's race problem that no one talks about". *The Guardian*, 19 May 2019. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/19/eu-race-problem-european-elections-meps-migrants-minorities (last accessed, 13 June 2019).

Haraway, Donna J., *Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2016.

Ndikung, Bonaventure Soh Bejeng, "Dis-Othering as Method. LEH ZO, A ME KE NDE ZA". Curatorial Concept, published online. Berlin: SAVVY Contemporary. https://savvy-contemporary.com/site/assets/files/4038/geographiesofimagination_concept.pdf (last accessed 19 November 2019).

Partridge, Damani J., and Matthew Chin, "Interrogating the Histories and Futures of 'Diversity': Transnational Perspectives". *Public Culture* 31 (2): 2019, pp. 197–214.

Pitts, Johny, *Afropean: Notes from Black Europe*. London: Penguin, 2019.

Rose, Nikolas, *The Politics of Life Itself. Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

1   The fieldwork that allowed me to write this article was funded by a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage (CARMAH) from the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung, as part of Sharon Macdonald's Alexander von Humboldt Professorship. This article is composed of excerpts from a longer piece that results from this postdoctoral research in the CARMAH project *Making Differences* in Berlin, in which I compared different curatorial practices in three Berlin-based institutions. SAVVY Contemporary was a focus of my research among other galleries, including the Berlin district gallery of Wedding, and the gallery of the ifa, and larger museum and heritage projects, including the Humboldt Forum.

2   *Afropean: Notes from Black Europe* (2019) by Johny Pitts, himself an affiliated member of the project, engages with the notion in order, he says, to overcome the problem of otherwise "hyphenated identities of *Afro-and…*" (personal communication).

3   Ahead of the 2019 European elections, a Guardian newspaper op-ed by Sarah Chander, with the telling title "Why is Brussels so white? The EU's race problem that no one talks about" (2019), states that "Migrants, minorities and people of colour are almost absent from tomorrow's list of prospective MEPs". As she points out, in the current (pre-election 2019) European parliament, representation of people of colour is "less than 3%, with Italy's Cécile Kyenge being the sole black woman".

4   Citation drawn from the shorter version of Ndikung's curatorial concept hosted by the BOZAR website: https://www.bozar.be/en/activities/136895-dis-othering (last accessed, 10 June 2019).

Decolonising Cultural Institutions: All or Nothing

WOUTER HILLAERT

How to decolonise art houses? It's *the* big question. Before the summer, the *Race, Power & Culture* symposium at BOZAR devoted three evenings to "a critical look at Belgian cultural institutions". There was quite a lot to learn. Especially just how far these institutions' public intentions and their internal structures remain mutually contradictory.

By now just about everyone agrees that cultural institutions' programming and workforces need to better reflect their highly diverse urban environment; the "cultural minorities" have been banging on this nail for at least twenty years. In recent years they have finally gained a hearing, certainly aided by the fact that they are no longer demographic minorities in Brussels and Antwerp. Institutions are well aware that they and their (often slightly older) publics are in danger of being sidelined as relics of a White monoculture in a post-colonial Europe if they do not radically call themselves into question.

Cultural policy, in the meantime, is blowing hot and cold: it has indeed placed diversity higher on the ladder of subsidy conditions, but since the voluntaristic activity of minister Bert Anciaux (1999–2009) and his *Interculturalization Action Plan* (2006), cultural policymakers have come up with hardly any initiatives of their own. After the rather silent years of Schauvliege and Gatz, the pendulum in the new Flemish government is even turning back to a conservative integration discourse, with cultural institutions required to propagate rather than question Flemish identity.

The merit of shifting the minds of the cultural sector can therefore be ascribed first and foremost to the increasing numbers of decolonising voices who are acquainting the sector, in bottom-up mode, with concepts such as "White privilege", "decolonisation" and "racialisation". That a part of the field reacts somewhat defensively (with reproaches such as "polarisation", "victimisation", or "politically correct fuss"), only proves how strong the pressure has become. Institutions need to open up, as they realise more than ever. They can hardly remain outside this movement.

The big question remains: how? There is clearly still a gap between discourse and practice. The search for directors with multiple backgrounds does not *per se* change an institution. And although more conscious attention is being given to coloured applicants for vacancies, the final choice easily slips back into well-worn ruts. And when the personnel is enriched with people with other perspectives, these persons often do not feel at home within the current structures, or are given little feeling that they can do much to change them. It is true that we are seeing a broader offering taking shape in several places, but this often seems to be more an expression of an institution's PR strategy and public functioning than of its artistic policy.

In most houses, in short, "diversity" remains an extra colour in the rustling foliage, not a strategy to renew the existing white trunk. The larger the institution, the harder it

is. Because by now it is clear that the key lies not in *giving* opportunities, but in *relinquishing* power and in entering into new horizontal relationships with decolonial organisations that possess the expertise to do so. How do you go about this if your institution has been built on a centralistic, hierarchical organisation model for decades?

BOZAR IN THE MIRROR

The federal institution Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR) has certainly taken steps in recent years. As "Belgium's oldest and largest arts house", it nowadays presents itself as a "house of change" that seized on the commemoration of 50 years of May '68 "to also take a close look at its own house and its own era" (as stated in the 2018 annual report). According to its new mission, BOZAR seeks to be "an active mediator for cultural-social change and social inclusion". It regards Europe as its key theme, but also wants to highlight relationships with other continents, and in so doing mirror the (Brussels) urban context. Co-creation, co-production and co-financing are the creed of this transition.

BOZAR is not there yet, director Paul Dujardin admitted on 22 May in his opening speech at the *Race, Power and Culture* symposium. "Despite recent positive developments, we still do not really work inclusively and do not decentralise our knowledge. As the study by sociologist Eric Corijn teaches, cultural institutions do not serve the majority of the Brussels population. We are working to diversify our audience and our programmes, but we need to do more. We have to re-evaluate our internal and external institutional practice against the reality of complex and unequal social relationships as a result of painful histories such as colonisation."

Citing Kader Attia, one of his favourite contemporary artists, Dujardin talks about the need for repair from gaping material and immaterial wounds. "Institutions like ours have the task of developing new inter-cultural and multidisciplinary methods that lead to repair, inclusiveness, cooperation and a shared future."

In terms of discourse, BOZAR therefore seems to be up with its time. The core of its public ambition is no longer expressed in terms of "target groups", "giving opportunities" or "multiculturalism", but rather of "decolonisation" and "new urbanity". It is no longer all sorts of under-represented artists who have a problem that institutions will solve some day, but the institution itself that forms the problem. This analysis is perhaps the result of all the dialogues and networks that BOZAR has developed in recent years from its 'Africa Desk' with a broad Afropean community, especially in the context of its three *Afropolitan Festivals* (2017–2019). Although those festivals were not beyond reproach, BOZAR certainly seems to have learned something from them.

"Dis-othering" is the newest term that the federal institution is injecting into decolonial institutional discourse in Belgium. In short, this concept (from Berlin curator Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung) stands for "self-reflection": do not project all sorts of properties onto the Other as a product, but investigate your own fears and fantasies.

Under this heading, BOZAR rolled out from end-2017 to end-2019 a reflection programme with the Berlin exhibition and reflection area SAVVY Contemporary and with Kulturen in Bewegung, the cultural department of the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC), sponsored with European money from the Creative Europe Programme. Together with Associate partners such as online magazine Afropean (London), the Ujazdowski

Castle Centre for Contemporary Art (Warsaw) and the Africa Museum (Brussels), *Dis-Othering* provided two years of exhibitions, debates, symposia, residencies and research journeys on how institutions can dismantle their well-worn intercourse with the Other. The *Race, Power & Culture* symposium at BOZAR looked back on that shared journey with a selection of the voices involved. What new insights has this institutional self-reflection produced?

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Two well-known speakers kicked off days one and two with keynote interventions. Ama Koranteng-Kumi, since 2017 diversity manager at the Antwerp Museum Foundation (Photo Museum, Fashion Museum and DIVA), emphasised in her lecture that "diversity strategies are not effective or sustainable as long as race and power are left out of the picture".

She took as example the way heritage museums consciously or unconsciously conceal the Black pages of history. For example, in post-colonial days they fall short in offering value and significance to ethnic-cultural minorities. "Either museums narrow the possible value of collections, or they lack the skills to unlock multi-layered narratives. Do they realise that for some visitors today they cause only pain and anger?" With Paul Gilroy, Koranteng-Kumi identified strategies of "amnesia" (deliberate forgetting) and "melancholia" (not wanting to accept the new society in White museums). For her the purported neutrality with which (museum) institutions like to shield themselves is therefore a dangerous illusion.

What needs to be done in concrete terms? Koranteng-Kumi says she is telling nothing new. The staff must be more diverse, and certainly in the higher (artistic) positions. At the same

time, the offering must dare to let go of its fixed aesthetic standards, dominant discourse and rigid categorisation. How deeply these are still embedded in our system was once again proved by the controversy around the Dutch contribution to the Venice Biennale by Iris Kensmil and Remy Jungerman – two Black artists for the first time. Was their work Dutch enough? Was it about art or identity politics? It seems that the same debates are always being held.

Both in policy and in the sector itself, Koranteng-Kumi sees serious attempts to take steps, but they are slow. Why? "Because power and privileges are not voluntarily relinquished." An insight that is as deep as it is tragic, but that does not have to hamstring the transition. Koranteng-Kumi sees two crucial challenges for progressive institutions: 1) to acknowledge that they are not neutral, and therefore act accordingly, by embracing race in exhibitions or other programmes and making way for new narratives that go against the status quo; and 2) to contribute financially to the periphery, to help install a diverse and equivalent ecosystem. "You can only tackle structural problems at the roots. All too often, power and money remain the elephants in the room in this debate."

RACIAL CONSUMER CULTURE

A day later, ULB researcher Véronique Clette-Gakuba focused in particular on "race" to identify three problem areas in the way institutions deal with African diaspora organisations. Also inspired by Gilroy, she defended the position that the issue of "race" is not just limited to some false cultural stereotypes that have to be uprooted. "Rather it is the specific product of European culture." That is why the struggle of Black artists must go beyond simply claiming their rightful place in art history: "It's all about rewriting the

entire history of this culture that produces race". That is the culture in which both negrophobia and negrophilia are deeply ingrained, and Black individuals are reduced to their Blackness, at the expense of all their other human qualities. Reduced in this way, they merely serve as utensils. "And it is precisely in that consumption relationship that race is produced [by the dominant culture]."

One would expect the arts to help dismantle that racial consumer culture, but Clette-Gakuba observes three patterns with which institutions confirm it in their dealings with the African diaspora. First of all, they use the high "visibility" of their stages as a blackmail tool to provide zero or only unworthy compensation. "Do you want to be seen or not? Then these are our conditions." Clette-Gakuba sees a big paradox in this: "The reason why Afro-descendent groups are approached by art institutions (for their Afro-descendent competencies) is precisely the same reason why they cannot receive subsidies in French-speaking Belgium (because their organisation might be ethnic-based)". In this way, cultural institutions benefit from the precarious – because structurally unsupported – position of these groups, and they render it doubly precarious.

Moreover, they often approach these groups more as mere providers of specific target groups than as equal artistic partners. These groups represent a part of the population that institutions cannot reach themselves, but with what objective? For Clette-Gabuka, "institutions should be a loudspeaker for the message that artists and associations from the African diaspora want to convey, but in practice they use it for their own White agenda." She notices that, for the institutions, the groups and artists involved are actually interchangeable, which immediately smells of ethno-racialisation.

A third consumer relationship is the

instrumentalisation of those few Black employees who are permanently or temporarily employed in institutions. Their task is often to contact the intended target groups, but at the same time they serve as a buffer to central power. They assimilate as spokespersons for the institution, but internally it is their White managers who make the real decisions. These (project) employees cannot touch the institution's rootstock. "In this way they serve to maintain at one and the same time the right involvement with and the right distance from the black bodies," said Clette-Gakuba.

She has to conclude that the exchange between institutions and the diaspora confirms rather than remedies the racial foundation of the cultural system. A great deal of cultural exchange reflects the unequal relationship that also applies to a lot of development cooperation: White powers present themselves as supporters of the aforementioned Afrodescendent cause, but all their collaborations are aimed at being able to continue to play the dominant role and to maintain the post-colonial institutional ecosystem. We must move away from such half-hearted and temporary solidarity, Clette-Gakuba concludes.

SELF-EXAMINATION OR SELF-PROMOTION?

This also sheds a double light on the symposium itself. Does BOZAR's choice of panelists and artistic interventions from almost only the African diaspora express power-sharing or just window dressing? Does the fact that the entire *Dis-Othering* process is funded by external European resources mean that for BOZAR it is a little added extra it would never invest in itself? Or is the fact that this post-colonial question is being raised with a much wider context than its own national borders in fact a step forward? The fact that the *Race, Power & Culture* symposium

took place in the BOZAR basement, while one floor above in the Henry Le Boeuf auditorium the Queen Elisabeth competition was entertaining a much more traditional audience, further reinforced this duality. Are we seeing here the rustling leaves or the steady paring back of the white trunk?

The line between institutional self-examination and self-presentation is thin. Olani Ewunnet of SAVVY, for example, led us with pictures through their past exhibition *Geography of Imagination* in Berlin, but two of the artists involved – Saddie Choua and Dimitri Fagbohoun – were not given enough time to talk about their own experiences with 'othering'. "Minorities have no power over how they are portrayed", Choua testifies. "More and more people and institutions want something different, but you are quickly in *feelgood* territory. I don't want to deliver *feelgood*. I want change."

The same double feeling is evoked by the "mapping" carried out – under the supervision of Jonas Tinius of Humboldt University – at the fifteen largest subsidised cultural institutions in Belgium, Germany and Austria by the three main partners behind *Dis-Othering*. These institutions' policy makers were sent a questionnaire about how and to what extent they are engaged in transition to diversification in communication, programming and staffing in a post-colonial Europe – supplemented by one interview per institution. "Our aim was not a detailed statistical analysis, but to open a long-term dialogue among institutions", said Olani Ewunnet of SAVVY. Together with Tonica Hunter from Kulturen in Bewegung and Naomi Ntakiyica from BOZAR, she shared at the symposium not the results, but their research experiences.

These are not that surprising. "We met with a great deal of scepticism towards the concept of our research, also because diversity is the elephant in the room and institutions do

not like to make certain data public", Ewunnet said. In Austria, political complexity was added, Hunter says. "Under a right-wing government it is visibly difficult for institutions to be open and self-critical about diversity, for fear of losing funding." A sufficient number of questionnaires were nevertheless returned. "The results are still being processed, but what is striking in Flanders is that institutions here are at least aware of the homework they need to do", Ntakiyica added. "You see good practices mainly in programming and smaller projects, but structurally little is happening yet. With regard to the personnel issue, institutions indicate that they do not know how to tackle this either. In fact, you could say that a diverse offering is possible at Belgian cultural institutions, as long as that does not require sacrifices".

One can well ask what the added value is of such qualitative research by institutions on institutions. For the first time, it focused specifically on *decision making staff*, but perhaps without much further mutual dialogue. And although the research reveals a lot of goodwill, the boundary between showing yourself vulnerable as an institution (BOZAR also took a closer look at itself in the research) and large-scale self-justification towards the outside world is thin. You also notice this in the other well-known Belgian institution: the new Africa Museum. Upon entering the old colonial museum, it first presents itself in a semi-critical tone about its own problematic past, but at the same time also wants in particular to show itself from all its good sides. And this symposium is at least as much about the *Dis-Othering* project itself as it is about its actual subject. How can you be more transparent about your difficult search as an institution, without it becoming self-promoting or even narcissistic? It's a difficult balance to strike.

DECOLONISATION = RECOLONISATION?

This became especially evident on day two, when the (failed) cooperation between BOZAR on the one hand and curator Sibo Kanobana (UGent) and his scientific committee of Véronique Clette-Gakuba (ULB) and Nicole Grégoire (ULB) on the other hand was the subject of public conversation between all parties involved, moderated by Omar Ba. This "making-of of the symposium" felt groundbreaking: the internal kitchen and power dynamics that are often deliberately kept hidden at institutions were now being openly discussed and shared. What went wrong between the institution and the curators and researchers from outside?

The reasons are, by reason of their extreme zoom-in, perhaps the most instructive of the entire symposium. For Clette-Gakuba and Grégoire there was too little (paid time for) good mutual communication, much too low compensation for the artists involved and also too little paid time and decision-making power available to the curator himself. In particular, the precise assignment and the promised *carte blanche* remained unclear to the Scientific Committee. Eventually, first Clette-Gakuba and Grégoire and then curator Kanobana withdrew, refusing to be part any longer of a mechanism of instrumentalisation and dominance that would make them serve a system that it was precisely their task to question. The trust was broken, if it ever really existed.

Kathleen Louw, former head of the Africa Desk at BOZAR, humbly explains this mainly from her own institutional reality. "We are a large institution with a heavy production machine, and our staff does not always find enough time and space to discuss all expectations individually or to closely follow new productions. The people at our geographical desks are generalists. That is precisely why we engage Afrodescendant experts and give them as much *carte blanche* as the production limitations within this large institution allow. And so I regret that the Scientific Committee was not open to dialogue before and after its withdrawal." Louw said that BOZAR had learned lessons from this: perhaps it should do less, accept that the BOZAR context does not serve well some programme forms, or involve guest curators for longer periods and in this way allow to build trust and *agency*.

For Nicole Grégoire, the failed cooperation mainly reveals a number of *structural* patterns at institutions. "The problem remains the unequal distribution of power and resources, as a result of which you as minorities quickly get the feeling of being instrumentalised within a cosmetic strategy. BOZAR uses solemn terms such as *social justice* on its website, but its primary public remains *haute finance*. Hence the chameleon character of power, while the decision structures remain the same. If you really want to change as an institution, much more thorough work is needed." In this way, Grégoire confirmed Véronique Clette-Gakuba's reading: that the essence of this unequal relationship is that the resources – here in Europe – are not directly allocated to diaspora players, but are always intermediated by (White) public institutions. "And so", concludes Clette-Gakuba herself, "you will hit up against White conservatism".

Rapper Spitler concisely summarised it in his artistic intervention: "We make the bread, but we get the crumbs. They make *dough* on our backs, we get nothing in return".

How do Brussels artists and cultural workers of African origin experience this themselves? When seven of them came onto the podium to end day two, we saw a unique gallery of pioneers, from Pitcho Womba Konga of the *Congolisation* festivals to Heleen Debeuckelaere of Black Speaks Back, but also a younger generation of activists such as Primrose Ntumba (Africa Museum).

Together they share as many visions as there are individuals. The core of their discussion – to the extent that the ticking clock leaves room for it – is a debate that cultural houses are still unaware of: does it make sense for artists from the diaspora to put so much energy into conquering a rightful place in the White institutions? Or would they be better served by putting their money into developing their own independent spaces, under their own conditions? In short: what has to be proposed to work differently with institutions?

Pitcho Womba Konga still believes in it. "Those institutions also belong to me, because I pay my taxes faithfully. And when their door is closed, you simply climb in through the window, there is always a way. We just have to be more intelligent than they think we are. And what already gives me hope is that there are more and more employees in those houses who speak in their own names, not just in the name of the institution. Things block at the top, but a lot of furniture is being shifted at ground-floor level. To create friction around one's expectations is what being an artist is all about." However, visual and video artist Guy Wouété sees things completely differently. "Even climbing in through that window remains quite complicated. And why are those doors closed? Why break the glass when you can build your own house? I myself have been in Belgium for ten years, but I don't have many experiences with institutions".

Heleen Debeuckelaere does, but also very two-sided ones. "We are often asked (very late in the day) to help institutions decolonise, but sometimes it seems to end up as "recolonisation": our bodies are used to represent all kinds of things for that institution. The principle then appears: *"Suck out all their knowledge, and then walk away"*. Or you are there solely to serve their communication strategy. But it doesn't have to be that way. When we cooperated with Vooruit for the *Same Same but Different* festival, things

certainly did not go perfectly, but we did have agency. We could make our voice heard. I don't see many other alternatives. You can of course dream of having your own house, but we don't have the resources for that. Institutions remain our only access to power. And the strange thing about culture houses, unlike universities, is that those who produce the content are often not part of the institution. Hence all the hassle about money and fees."

THE MACHINE VERSUS THE COGS

All this gives a picture of the entire "diversity debate" as it is currently being conducted within the cultural sector. At least the people who are involved are being heard, even if still often subject to the conditions of the regular sector itself. The core of the matter – power inequality – is now openly referred to, and not only by diaspora artists. And because a long-standing theoretical tradition, from Frantz Fanon to Gloria Wekker, has finally come to the ear of our White culture sector. A younger generation is curious about it, is looking for its own position. Some institutions today are even daring to be publicly vulnerable, enter the discussion, learn to accept blame and shame.

Of course, this entire conversation remains on shaky ground, with a lot of tension and emotion. But little by little something new is indeed being built up and something else broken down, little by little new things are being learned and positions are changing. Although that debate on social media can degenerate often enough, it seems that the underlying conversation itself cannot be blocked – with all the scepticism, distrust and sometimes deep, personal wounds that come with it. The elephant itself is still there, but is being recognised. This symposium illustrates that situation in all possible ways: it is

still double-talk, but it is shared.

That is why the new Flemish government's desire to force cultural institutions into a nationalistic straitjacket to propagate "Flemish culture" as the only norm, and the fact that it is at the same time no longer ready to grant support to self-organising associations of people with non-European backgrounds feels so counter-productive and even ominous. The government coalition agreement says it wants to see more inclusion (although it actually means "assimilation"), but threatens to blow apart all the cautious steps in this direction in the cultural sector by shifting priotities from more diverse programmes to more "Flemish culture" and further exacerbating the power imbalance.

That is why it felt so unfortunate that BOZAR director Paul Dujardin, in reacting to the debate, did not remain seated like the colleagues from other institutions present in the room, but spontaneously rushed onto the stage. In the same headstrong line his docile speech was scarcely related to his guests' discussion, nor to the institutional missions with which he had opened the symposium barely 24 hours earlier. "I hear a lot of hope and frustration. I also heard this discussion in the 1980s in Berlin, when Peter Stein performed *Die Neger* in the Schaubühne. I'm learning nothing new."

Against Heleen Debeuckelaere's criticism, Dujardin argued that during his tenure BOZAR's staff had quadrupled, and that this year he had still to find even 10-15 million to pay all the wages. "We do a lot for diversity in BOZAR, even though politicians have never asked me to do so. Our Africa Desk has in the meantime four or five employees. Of course there is a great tension in my house between the formidable classical European legacy, for which the departments in question really go on the defensive, and an incredible dynamic around Africa, the Balkans, the migration issue... But within a horizontal

organisation we try to ignore that complexity. We are not a museum, but an open space for so many projects that we are permanently trying to implement, and not just through events. We are no doubt still doing a lot in the wrong way, but we are trying to find a new balance in our policy."

This intervention came across as so intrusive to both the panel members and many of the listeners that all the final day's speakers ultimately withdrew collectively, and the symposium ended in a minor key with a handful of artistic interventions. For those who have been struggling for years with the subtle power mechanisms and/or ignorance of White institutions, this moment once again reflected just about all the institutional (self-)criticism that had previously been shared in the same space: that of the central power that shrugs its shoulders consciously or unconsciously, the self-preservation that breaks through the verbal cosmetics, the persistent self-reference. Véronique Clette-Gakuba even saw afterwards a direct link between this ending and the making-of of the symposium: "That intervention did not come across as something unforeseen, but rather as a reaction to the fact that the symposium had not run as planned by BOZAR. The speakers simply had not played the roles that the entire institution (and not just Dujardin) had devised for them".

What exactly did BOZAR want to get out of this symposium, for which it had convinced so many voices to come and share their ideas? Who had to come here to learn what from whom? Any trust that had been built up in the Afro-descendent community suffered another blow here. The repair that was so proudly announced at the opening will therefore take time. It is not enough that Dujardin afterwards apologised by email for his intervention to all involved.

This debate is about much more than personalities. What suddenly broke out onto

the surface here is a much deeper tension that is inherent to the diversity debate: what is the speed, depth and extent of the desired institutional changes? In the answer to that question lies the real confrontation between the outside world and the institutions themselves. While for true diversity management *the entire machine* needs to be changed from the central engine room outwards, institutions like to emphasise which *cogs* have already been renewed or replaced. This difference in perspective goes beyond the metaphor of the empty and the full glass. Perhaps institutions naturally think in this phase – and Dujardin's promise of "a new balance" illustrates that – still in "side by side" terms: they do not go for the integral change model, but for the combination model, in which "change" is defined as a "more colourful" mosaic in which innovation and status quo can exist "side by side" within their organisations. They see that as a step forward, but that actually means nothing to the outside world. As long as the machine itself remains intact, nothing has changed.

Which includes BOZAR. In the meantime, several people of African descent may indeed be employed in the creative and production departments, BOZAR staff may now indeed speak forty languages, a Chief Inclusion Officer may indeed be hired to work transversally in the institution for three years, one can indeed work for better speaker fees, and there can indeed be more and more high-quality programmes in BOZAR that consciously reflect Brussels, European and global super-diversity... But as long as the range of classical music being played elsewhere in the house remains based on the European standard, and parts of the staff continue to resist criticism as expressed on programmes such as *Race, Power & Culture*, that criticism will continue to exist.
A bit of everything in this phase still means nothing. The task is not simply to add a little

more colour, it is to *dissolve* White power. It is not just the offering that has to change, but the machine behind it. The *attitude* of the institution must be turned on its head. This is the paradox of "diversity": to offer an equal place to a wide range of perspectives and productions requires a single, consistent choice, not a "balanced" placing side-by-side of various individual choices. But the larger the institution, the more this goes against both its organisational model and its connection with the social elite.

That is what the conflict surrounding the symposium was all about. BOZAR will emphasise what it has brought in: new artistic creations, an institution that is vulnerable, more coloured voices than ever before that can express themselves, the exercise of committing to a complex mapping... and not unjustly. But everything else that seems to contradict this, such as that one unfortunate intervention, again *annihilates* this to the outside world. Because in this way the change appears not to be integral, not fundamental, and therefore also not sincere. And what fails to come across as sincere is what Sarah Ahmed described in *The Language of Diversity* in 2007 as *rebranding*: "Words such as 'diversity' might allow the organisation to accumulate value, by re-branding itself as being diverse or even as being committed to diversity without, as it were, doing anything. Or they might not. They might yet cause more trouble". For a growing outside world, diversification that is not genuinely *total* appears as merely an advertisement for a machine that wants to keep running as it has always done.

Not that the institutions are not trying also to change the machine. For example, BOZAR is working on a new organisation chart, in which the "geographic teams" such as the Africa Desk are integrated into the regular operation: an attempt to transform the combination model into a more integrated organisation and cross-

cutting programme policy. How that will turn out remains to be seen. Mixed colours can also end up as a grey mass, if this remains the majority vision in the house. Everything depends on what the engine room wants to control and change.

What is certain is that "not everything" today amounts to "nothing". This is not the "impossible" demand of "polarising" minorities "without patience or understanding", but the effect of the accumulated concentration of power for centuries, and all the injuries received over and over again. Half work is therefore not a sufficient promise that those injuries will be excluded in the future. "Giving a voice" is not a genuine gesture without also reducing one's own speaking power. Congratulating yourself as an institution on what has already moved comes across more as self-preservation than self-criticism. In short: dis-othering – the broadly expressed ambition of BOZAR not to project all kinds of traits onto the Other, but to investigate its own fears and fantasies – means nothing as long as not everything speaks of "dis-othering". It means nothing as long as the discourse is not fully in harmony with practice.

And several institutions are struggling with this: as long as they are not distrustful of their own structures and agendas, they will not gain the confidence of those who can help renovate their houses. "Diversity is not a goal in itself", Sarah Ahmed once wrote, "But a tool for transformation". Every fan that is not held at the bottom at one point – the choice to decolonise integrally – remains a bunch of loose feathers.

"We make the bread, but we get the crumbs.
They make dough on our backs, we get nothing in return"
Rapper Spitler.

DIVERSITY POLITICS ARE "A POSITIVELY LOADED FOCUS TO REPLACE THE NEGATIVELY LOADED STRUGGLE TO FIGHT AGAINST INEQUALITY, THEREBY DISTRACTING POLITICS FROM THE NECESSARY SOCIAL BATTLES"

Dr. Nourai Oulai, 2012

70

LOUCKA FIAGAN, COLLECTIVE WDNKYT

It came out as fluid as... Well, never mind the metaphor. There was a quick exchange of words at the end of Moya Michael's piece, *Coloured Swans*, on which Oscar and I had both collaborated in making the scenography, sounds and texts. It was in KVS at the end of November 2018 and when they quickly mentioned something about a future meeting, we responded very enthusiastically. Of course! BOZAR? That'll forge some stories to tell. I've come across a number of different views with regard to the institution itself, a lot of which were cynical.

I've had many friends and friends of friends telling me *things* about BOZAR, different perceived stories about BOZAR not being the most considerate institution when it came to putting minority cultures under the spotlight. I had my own opinion about art in museums; get it out of the darn space and let it live! Though this is a delicate thing to say.

It's always delicate, you see; on the one hand wanting to be exposed in order to reach people and make a living, and on the other, not wanting to completely cede to implicit regulations in the sector, to "market" codes, to the give and take procedure we all know about, fanning the flames of large-scale consumption... a certain privileged class of humanity craving for something more to give the end of the day its kick, just before bedtime. So, where do we hold between these two alternatives as artists? Where do our interests

merge or compete without values? Or rather, when do our values have to concede to reality?

Say the frame of art museums offer, to some extent, a dead space to look inside of... Well what? Well, life itself taken out of its natural environment. How long can the thing survive in this new habitat, with its blank white walls and languid-expression guardians at the corner of each room who'll probably eat you if you get too close to a painting or something.

As one of the big central institutions for the arts and culture in Belgium, BOZAR is a major promoter of what *should* be "cultural" for today's Belgian consumer of the arts. Let's not forget we're talking about a market here: the Art market. Like all markets, it has its laws and regulations, a demand to satisfy. How many of its exhibitions in the course of an entire year give an honest representation of minority populations? And by honest, I mean a form of representation that wouldn't fall into the easy trap of sensualisation. In my own guesstimation, very few. If the fine art museums aren't selling works, they are however selling a vision, a taste, a flavour, and it would be naïve to ignore the social and political partnerships behind the construction of these flavours.

At first, the many opinions I received were mainly from, uhm... well, mainly from artists, those underpaid and overworked individuals that we know so well – and yes, I was happy to take into account any amount of personal experience, grudges, or whatever other personal affair in order to forge my own opinion in these matters... And yes, for sure, it transpires there was an

71

immense portion of promising artistic talents being kept in the shadow of BOZAR's programme, with the undergrounds of aesthetic reinvention striking the African continent like never before.

We can't ignore the tie that Belgium shares with Africa, as if the former were the adopted child of the latter. An eerie kind of adoption, and yet I do believe that the one cannot grow without the other, which results in these two cultures being inevitably bound by their historical passages, both chosen and enforced.

I've yet to hear the promising scream from beneath the tides of mutilation, something that we could call a bridge between the new generations of both continents who've swept their past turmoil aside to embrace mutual horizons. A place where the unknown past and emerging future merge. Meanwhile... empty white spaces prevail with an iron stick and extensively long descriptions as the mark of modernity (that was me being cynical).

The first meeting went extremely well. Before we knew it and without yet having shown any of our personal work, we were embarked on the project. It was intended to be a gathering for the Afrodescendant diaspora in which discussions would be held around our relational tactics, inside of predominantly White institutions. There would be some performances and lectures, and we were given carte blanche to close the event's last night with our performance *bluland* revisited into this context.

This was all very promising, but things eventually turned sour. The entire event took place, quite ironically, in the underground spaces of BOZAR, while the Queen Elizabeth competition was taking place on the main floors. Needless to say, this gave birth to very bizarre situations in between the talks and shows, where very different audience types radically ignored each other. A cold wall emerged before these different populations, marking a clear but invisible separation. It was here that I spotted the first blatant signs of *otherness*.

Nothing talks more eloquently than the context itself. There was this very clear form of separation, which fed, well... a growing sense of unease amidst all the participants, and also amongst friends of ours who were not themselves part of the event, but certainly didn't fail to notice the overall sense of the bizarre. It wasn't until the current director of BOZAR got on stage during a debate, not only closing the debate with his words, but also leaving more than one member of the audience and the guest speakers (of which I was one) quite offended at not being able to reply, that the uneasiness would eventually manifest into words and actions. The behaviour of BOZAR's director, which was seen by many as a major lack of respect, on top of the overall context in itself, was enough for the diaspora to make a collective decision to boycott the rest of the event – a decision that cast a shadow over my partner and I, since we were busy preparing the show for the next day, which we played to a half-empty room.

The entire situation was regretful, but I only felt the first marks of disappointment as I spoke about it on the phone with Sibo, one of the previous organisers.

The disappointment came from smelling repetition, a repetition of reactions, of entire scenes that if you slowly deconstructed them, brought you back to the usual hassle of You and I. Though I completely understood the frustration, I didn't think leaving the space was the most innovative response; clearly there was no new outcome, no bridges being made. Just distinct sides exposing their distinctiveness, their *otherness*. Dis-othering... Really?

Is it enough then, to have overcome your personal past if you still walk in a collective shambles? This may sound like it comes out of nowhere, just like saying the sun rises is a way of talking, yet it is something I keep repeating.

Basically, our lives are made of repetitions that have lost their initial sense. Once we've understood why they are no longer relevant, are we able to emancipate ourselves from repeating these models unless everyone around us decides to let go of them too? No decision is made alone, apart from by the few who risk being called out for being a little too big for their boots, coocoo.

To go back to this idea of otherness, what is it made of, and where does it come from? I suppose if we rolled all the way back in time to when we were a pack-based species, and I read this from the psychologist Timothy Leary who coined the 8-circuit model of consciousness back in the '60s, we would have an in-built programme to mark our territory against other threatening packs. One tactic that is born out of concern with survival and territory is to exhibit the traits of one's own singularity, in opposition to the *other*, the mixed bag of all other forms against which the wild cat pees on a tree trunk to mark its own land.

Aren't we just animals in the end, albeit a slightly more twisted and neurotic version of the mammals we normally find? And if we transposed this mechanism onto more social aspects, then I guess it's a survival instinct that pushes a culture, inside of this miasma of cultures intertwined and knitwitted, to constantly exhibit panels, visible and understandable panels for the eyes of *others*. Who makes the others? Would the other now still make an-other for tomorrow?

When we say "other", from which perspective are we looking? All genocides offer a clean historical example of the drifts and destructive potential that reside within a single human mind when we fully pursue its desire to impose one form of order upon all other life forms.

So what makes an identity, as opposed to otherness? Ways of being, ways of saying, ways of talking, ways, ways and all-ways more ways. Manners, codes, and conducts; all of which are either induced, produced by the family tree or the larger societal hive. It's a constant cry from deep within the masses of slow-moving bodies smudged together saying "Whouamaaaaye?" We can bring this overall cry to every independent person.

What we call borders are then nothing more than the outsourcing limitations that result ultimately from this cry, this cry and all the other cries simultaneously screeching "Who am I?" Borders in the one-to-one relations that shape borders of larger-scale demographics, popular beliefs, and so on.
If it isn't nature, it's history that places us here, or there, makes us say this or that, think this or that, assume that this or that is us, per se, assume that this or that could be legitimately opposed to this other, and that other... time to eat.

Coming back to BOZAR, why leave this space? Wouldn't it be a fair move to consider these spaces, public spaces, as ours, as belonging to its people, as being in *our* hands no matter what? What do we gain and make gain for the so-called other in leaving? If institutions of a certain model and their representatives would prefer to keep things concealed, we must work to keep them open. Not in the name of this identity that is once again a subject of time, incidence, grudge, and fear, but rather in the name of the point towards which all oppositions converge. Let's imagine they've already got there and merged, cancelled their oppositions, because is there really a distinction between the moment you decide to go somewhere and the moment you find yourself in that very place?

So farewell, then, and we'll be back to meet again, for as long as species make distinctions and draw borders with which to orientate themselves through apparent chaos, there is instantaneously another tendency which is to break these borders and bridge new connections, allowing new relations to respire, to breathe.

It's not even that there's a choice to be made between one or the other, because they are actually identical. I first have to make myself *other* to then realise that the *other* does not exist other than in the pure fruit of my imagination – a collective, historical imagination. It is therefore a question of perspective that we've got to change, to move from the permanent state of disunion which forges towards the state of union which will always give the right intention to our interactions. Break the apparent duality and embrace a sort of social schizophrenia.

Once we've understood this, quarrels between this or that ethnic group seem futile, like an ongoing hassle in the back of one's head. They exist and I take part on the grounds that we need to valorise our uniqueness, but not our 'otherness'.

James Baldwin said, "I am what time, circumstance, history, have made of me, certainly, but I am, also, much more than that. So are we all".

I cannot only be defined by history, because I am more than that. I am history that is time unfolding to its final conclusion, where time ceases to exist; I am time itself. It is more interesting to tend towards what could be common to all of us, and for now, that is relation, the very nature of being societal. We cannot cure a traumatic past by continuing to name it as something we are by nature, we have to understand that this traumatic past is not only the weight of afro-descendants, but that of the entire world.

The wars, slavery, and mass slaughter, the rape of women and children, the torturing of innocent people... All these things are the weight of humanity as a whole, the collective burden we cannot replace, hide or avoid confronting without it coming back at us in some way or another. It's the inevitable depth, continuously lurking within us that we must assume as being part of our

nature, part of what we are, part of this idea that *otherness* should be something, which, if my kind should continue to exist, must be eradicated by whatever means and against all odds.

But once we've assumed that as a part of what we are, or rather as a part of what we do in the belief of what we are, what we see is a limited expression of what truly is, and since nobody to this day, I presume, could say, *"this is what I am"* without immediately lying to himself or actually saying, *"this is what they say I am"*, I prefer to regard that as a never ending tap full of mystery and let mystics deal with telling us more about it. For my part, I enjoy making art and exploring new forms of expression. I take pleasure in breaking codes and inventing apparently *useless* things to look at and hear. Looking for people to connect with and share this pleasure, whatever their colour and sexual orientation. *Hmm... I find their musical preferences a more interesting basis on with which to connect. Might that draw a perspective for future identities? What *sounds are yer into my friend?*

(Doing) Diversity in the Flemish Cultural Heritage / Arts Field

AMA KORANTENG-KUMI

For the past ten years I have been professionally active in two areas: as a social entrepreneur and activist, with the focus on eco-well-being and resilience strategies in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Amsterdam; and as an independent advisor and project leader in the cultural heritage and arts sector in Amsterdam and Antwerp.

Examples of the cultural projects that I have contributed to behind the scenes include the project "1975", a two-year programme by the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam that investigated the relationship between international contemporary art and colonialism, and the launch of *ZAM Magazine*, an international photography platform for African photographers.

About a year ago, I joined the Museum Foundation in Antwerp in order to set up and implement a diversity and inclusion policy that was intended to lead to a more meaningful role for our museums. The Museum Foundation is the umbrella organisation representing three cultural heritage institutions in Antwerp: The Photo Museum (FOMU), The Fashion Museum (MoMu), and DIVA (the Diamond Museum). Between them, these three museums welcome over half a million visitors a year.

The challenge that we face is that of being cultural heritage institutions situated in a postcolonial and super-diverse society, yet with this diversity barely represented in our audiences and staff, and with multiperspectivity still lacking in our programming and collection value.

Cultural instructions often approach diversity as a form of participation, simply to increase the numbers of "diverse" visitors in the physical space through a temporary programme. This is just scratching the surface and is a perspective on diversity, which, as discussed by the scholar Philomena Essed (2002), derives from deficiency thinking, or differential-thinking. The real challenge we face is that of transforming our museums into spaces where groups and audiences now underrepresented in our museums have more agency and representation. This also entails questioning our relevance and impact as cultural (heritage) institutions, and finding ways to engage in the political, social, and cultural realities of society.

As the feminist scholar **SARA AHMED** describes, diversity is not an end that can be achieved through demographic changes in museum staff or audiences. It is work that has "the explicit aim of transforming the institution" – in other words, diversity and inclusion can work as tools for transformation.[1]

Diversity efforts and strategies in the cultural sector are not effective or sustainable if the matter of race and power is not addressed and tackled.

Let's take the case of our cultural heritage institutions. These institutions are collectors, keepers and promoters of cultural heritage. They have the task of recognising and promoting the diversity and (cultural) dynamics of cultural heritage. What we choose to collect or the way

in which we unlock this heritage has to have meaning, relevance and value to the diverse communities of our society. This collection value is important in our postcolonial and multicultural society, because it's a matter of narrative and shapes identity and belonging in society.

Museum workers need to be more critical and reflective in the stories we choose to tell and how we tell them, because our narratives often do not incorporate the perspectives of those in a minority position in our society – minority in terms of ethnicity, socioeconomic and political power.

Collection objects can represent the memory of nations, but at the same time the trauma and pain of communities. The 'Whiteness' of our institution (Whiteness as a system) has led to the collection value and policy of museums being sites of forgetfulness and fantasy. As keepers of cultural heritage, reflexivity is crucial when dealing with a collection in order to bring meaning and value to the audiences we want to reach.

Inspired by the work of the British scholar, Paul Gilroy, I always use the term "Amnesia" – the willingness to forget – and that of "Melancholia" – our struggle to accept multicultural sociality and non-fixed Flemish identities. We know what needs to happen, but in daily reality we see museum workers either choosing to narrow this collection value to a homogenous group – with the motto that cultural heritage and museums are neutral – or we witness museum workers failing to acquire the skills for a multi-layered unlocking of cultural heritage. Our cultural heritage is NOT neutral. In fact, with our colonial past, our material and immaterial cultural heritage has an explicit negative collection value for many people of colour in Belgium and the Netherlands. Pain, anger, and dismay are some examples of the emotions that cultural heritage institutions evoke through their exhibitions and programs, therefore a false sense of neutrality can also "emotionally" exclude people of colour.

There is still a lot of interesting research to be done, therefore, on emotional inclusiveness – the emotional connection between audiences of colour and cultural institutions.
The challenges set by the need for diversity and inclusion in our cultural institutions are not new; they have been around for a long while and are well known.

Staff. There is a general lack of cultural diversity among the staff, and especially in higher-ranking positions. These higher-ranked positions are the decision-making positions that can influence the power play on the work floor and transform the way an institution works. These are also the positions that have the say in selecting which artistic, creative and intellectual contribution are seen as valuable or relevant, and which not.
Programming is another challenge: the lack of artistically diverse programming, approached from different perspectives in terms of staff and daily operations. In the programming of artists, we are led by a fixed norm of aesthetics, according to rigid categories of low-art and high-art, and so on.
Artists of colour are structurally underrepresented in our cultural institutions and constantly deal with discussions of "quality" and identity politics.

One interesting example is the recent controversy around the Dutch entry at the Venice Biennale, which featured works by two Dutch-Surinamese artists, Iris Kensmil and Remy Jungerman. Questions were raised about this entry.[2] Was it Dutch? Could it be Dutch in all its Blackness? Was it about art, or identity, or diversity politics…? Charl Landvreugd, an Afro-Dutch artist and scholar wrote an interesting article[3] about this controversy, describing how Black artists in the

Netherlands are entangled in the paradox of inhabiting and denying the space that is set out for them on the basis of ethnicity. He describes how the frame in which his work (and that of his Afro-Dutch colleagues) was understood could only be through a cultural identification with his parent's homeland, Suriname, and not through identification with the Netherlands.

In early 2000, the WAKAMAN[4] artists collective in which he was involved chose this as a strategy for gaining inclusion in the Dutch art discourse, a strategy that meant culturally passing for Surinamese.

In Belgium, artists also struggle with the implicitly racialised space that is reserved for them and imagine a different horizon for the future. In their State of the Youth speech in 2018, the two theatre actors Aminata Demba and Aïcha Cissé describe how Black female actors' ideas and associations are projected onto them, forcing them into a box. "As artists of colour, it feels like we have to choose a side in the diversity discourse, but often we are fully preoccupied with other struggles, namely surviving as a maker, as a player and searching for our own artistic language."

There is growing diversity in our cities nowadays, but the declining numbers of people of colour engaged in the mainstream cultural sector has posed a policy challenge for some time. Right now, diversity in culture is being hyped, but this hype is more like a wave. It has tended to come and gone over the years.

In the Netherlands, the subject of cultural diversity came onto the Dutch cultural policy agenda some fifteen years ago. The Dutch policy is a pragmatic one. The focus is on the sector showcasing best practices, and in 2011, the Cultural Diversity Code[5] was set up for structurally subsidised cultural institutions. The pragmatic Dutch cultural policy has been to broaden the audience groups and to have more diversity at the

administrative level (that is to say, on the boards). Since 2015, there has also been an increased awareness of the impact of colonialism and racism and how this has implicated the power relations in the cultural landscape in the Netherlands.

In Flanders, attention to diversity in the arts has been on and off the agenda for the last 25 years. In 2006, the minister for culture, Bert Anciaux, stated that "society must be intercultural, or it has no right to exist ".[6] His top-down approach led to quotas and dedicated budgets for diversity. In 2008, interculturalism became an official subsidy criterion in arts policy. In 2009, his successor as minister, Joke Schauvliege, changed this tactic to a bottom-up approach (more like the pragmatic approach of the Netherlands). The focus became one of promoting ethnic-cultural diversity in the sector, showcasing best practices, and shifting ownership to the cultural sector. It was up to the cultural institutions to come up with a pragmatic plan for change. An engagement manifest between the government and the sector was set up to strengthen this approach.

In the current cultural policy discourse of the minister, Sven Gatz,[7] it is notable that the social role and social responsibility of the cultural sector are emphasised. In this policy, he states: "In order to strengthen people in their self-awareness and social participation, it is important that everyone within a super-diverse society is given opportunities and challenged to participate in culture life-long" (Sven Gatz, Policy Document on Culture, 2014–2019).
So yes, there has been effort – in terms of policy as well as within the sector (and by sector here I mean the cultural institutions, funding institutions, and artists) – but progress is slow.

Progress is slow because we are dealing with a structural problem and structural problems can only be solved if we dare get to the root of the problem.

So how to dig deeper and transform our museums into spaces where groups and audiences that are now underrepresented and emotionally neglected have agency and representation?

THE NEED TO RE-EVALUATE INSTITUTIONAL VALUES

This starts with accepting that our cultural institutions are not neutral, and acting on the basis of this outlook. Our cultural institutions are political, as every decision made is based on a specific point of view, or framework, and our institutions are mostly places of White, male and heteronormative privilege.

As museum workers and as individuals, we are also politically motivated – our worldview informs our understanding of situations and influences our actions. In our daily practice as museum workers, we can choose whether or not to reinforce this privilege and these power structures. This even starts with the language we use. We speak of inclusion, but whom are we including? Even in our language we imply that people of colour can only participate by invitation thereby reinforcing the notion that they somehow exist outside the dominant system.

So, as gatekeepers, we can choose to educate ourselves and evaluate our mindset, attitude and actions, and determine how these contribute to the status quo. We can choose to address and question these dominant values in our daily practice and encourage and support colleagues to do the same.

Where can this lead?
- As a museum, you can embrace race as an importance aspect of social realities, of your past and the histories you present.
- You can structurally make room for new narratives in your exhibition schedules and

programming, narratives that do not lead to "othering", but are celebrated as being equally important and complimentary to the dominant system of values.
- You can help to rethink how we, as cultural spaces, can connect to local communities, building trust and relationships that are lasting, and finding new forms of knowledge, insight, and aesthetics to be valued within our spaces.
- As a museum worker, you can develop new skillsets and reflexivity in how you write your texts and how the objects are presented, in the knowledge that these objects can represent the memories of cities, regions and countries, but also the trauma of a community – or that collections can even be sites of forgetfulness and fantasy.

Transformation, therefore, means authentically wanting to engage in the political, social, and cultural realities of society today. It means accepting the need to be an open house, and even a safe space for uncomfortable discussions, and daring to tackle difficult questions. As feminist writer and scholar Philomena Essed states: "We have to pro-actively uproot the last colonial traces [...] of racialised power" (Essed, 2002).

Why does change come so slowly?
Because power and privilege are such a slow burner.
How can I radically make space even if it undermines my own position and privilege?
As elite cultural institutions, is it not time to financially contribute to a more artistically diverse and equal cultural system? Difficult questions, but since power is a slow burner, this is the elephant in the room that policy makers and cultural professionals must tackle.

NOTES

1 Wendy Ng, Syrus Marcus Ware, and Alyssa Greenberg (2017) "Activating Diversity and Inclusion: A Blueprint for Museum Educators as Allies and Change Makers, Journal of Museum Education", 42:2, 142-154, DOI: 10.1080/10598650.2017.1306664
2 https://www.volkskrant.nl/cultuur-media/drie-surinaams-nederlandse-kunstenaars-naar-de-biennale-van-venetie-2019~b8ef263f/
3 http://www.uitgeverijkannibaal.be/the-measurement-of-presence
4 https://remyjungerman.com/special-projects/
5 https://codeculturelediversiteit.com/
6 https://cjsm.be/cultuur/sites/cjsm.cultuur/files/public/beleidsbrief2005-2006_cultuur.pdf
7 The Flemish Prime Minister, Jan Jambon (from the right-wing N-VA) has been responsible for Culture since October 2019. His recent measures include installing a Flemish canon and scrapping 60% of the project subsidies in the culture sector.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING
AS A NEW AUDIENCE
THERE ARE ONLY
NEGLECTED AUDIENCES

Hassan Mahamdallie

POWER AND PRIVILEGE
DO NOT
SHIFT VOLUNTARILY

Ama Koranteng-Kumi, 2019

DIVERSITY IS NOT AN END THAT CAN BE ACHIEVED THROUGH DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN MUSEUM STAFFS OR AUDIENCES… DIVERSITY IS A TOOL FOR TRANSFORMATION

Sara Ahmed

Tensions and Interstices in the Making of a Black World: The Case of the Belgian Art Scene

VÉRONIQUE CLETTE-GAKUBA

INTRODUCTION

In Belgium and in Europe more generally, the concept of race is still commonly considered to be an issue that concerns above all the groups who are subjected to racial discrimination and violence, as reflected in the term "racialised" ("racisé").[1] While useful in spotlighting the existence of racialisation processes, this term focuses our attention uniquely on the victims of these processes, the so-called ethnic or ethnoracial minorities. Not only does this notion cloak the racial category of the dominant Whites, it problematically presents race as necessarily being the product of direct relations with the racialised groups. In reality, the term "racialised" refers only to the result of the racialisation process, ignoring the question of the sites and settings of race (re)production.[2] This makes it difficult to perceive that White culture is in fact a source of race production that operates just as well with or without the racialised groups. Reframing race as a problem belonging to racialising societies constitutes an important shift in perspective, conditioning the very possibility of understanding "what has happened to racialised groups" no longer in terms of results, but in terms of the operations carried out on bodies, thereby allowing all this to happen.

REVISITING A FEW LINKS BETWEEN RACE AND WHITE CULTURES

In the introduction to the 1993 article entitled "Art of darkness. Black Art and the Problem of Belonging to England", Paul Gilroy points out one reason why anti-racism movements fail: they never sufficiently take into account the role of British culture in the production of race.[3] To illustrate the link between race and culture, Gilroy evokes J.M.W. Turner's famous painting The Slave Ship (1840), representing the slaver Zong and the floating bodies of slaves thrown overboard for strictly economic considerations. If a link exists between aesthetics and race, it must be placed within the context of a pro-abolitionist canvas. Here, the British aesthetic produces a compassionate racial imaginary; a Black-body aesthetic used to arouse compassion. By evoking this painting, considered a masterpiece of British culture, Gilroy principally points out that a racial imaginary lies at the heart of British cultural production. And it is through this prism that Great Britain considers its destiny. This observation allows us to comprehend that race is less a question of otherness than a theme intrinsic to British or even Western culture. Pointing out that, over time, art critics would drop their focus on slavery to exclusively praise the tumultuous and wonderfully rendered sea, Gilroy makes a second important observation: that in reality, British culture – or again, Western culture – actually conceals its contribution to the production of a racial imaginary. This masking allows both White progressives and conservatives

to confuse their cultural problem (that of race) with the groups subjected to it.

Race is not simply a matter of erroneous representation, it is more a category of captured Black bodies. Frantz Fanon utilises the term "epidermisation" to refer to the process of inscribing race on bodies. There is, therefore, a corporal operation that is essential to grasp. The historical study of Blackface carried out by William T. Lhamon in his work *"Peaux blanches, masques noirs"* offers an illuminating illustration.[4] Lhamon traces the history of this practice back to Saint Catherine's Market in New York around the 1820s: White labourers would imitate the dances performed by free Black workers at the market, with the goal of attracting buyers for their eels. Afraid of being abducted by slave owners prowling the market, free Black workers would emit a whistling and could be surreptitiously recognised by their distinctive dance. At the time, the imitation of these Black workers by White proletarians (which included Blackface) was motivated by the working class's admiration for these dances. They also imitated their singular whistling. Up until then, such Blackface and whistling arose from the awareness of a shared condition (with free Black and White labourers both defying the bourgeoisie). Finding this sign of alliance between the Black and White working classes to be unbearable, the upper class went about removing this practice of Blackface and whistling from its market-place context, with White comedians adopting these performances on bourgeois stages so as to ridicule Black people. It was this use of Blackface by or for the White upper class that marked the start of a racialisation process, with an ensemble of demeaning associations assigned to certain physical features, while the earlier Blackface performed by White proletarians had instead served to create a common territory.

The racist symbolism of Blackface born during this period therefore proceeded from a desire to prevent social protest, to break nascent solidarities and thereby ensure the White upper class's continued capacity to profit from the material and symbolic resources apportioned by this racial demarcation line. So we here see that race is not a sum of prejudices, but rather a discursive mechanism capturing Black bodies so as to maintain an unequal relationship favourable to the White world.

This cultural construction of race through the appropriation of Black bodies diverts us from a problem posed in terms of false stereotypes and representations. For the time being, let us keep in mind that racial imaginaries are born within and belong to white cultures. Let us also keep in mind that the exercise consisting of forcing this imaginary category onto Black bodies – to the point of mixing them all in together – works all the more effectively given that the White cultures have never properly discussed the central role they played in the production of race. Finally, while it must be remembered that the problem of race is not one of tenacious stereotypes, the article by Norman Ajari, *"Du désir négrophilique. Arthur Jafa contre l'érotique coloniale de la masculinité noire"*, helps us understand that the ideology of race belongs to the White world, which (re)plays, through particular forms of desire, taste and affect, the possibility of using the Black body to serve its own ends.[5] Such is the case with negrophilia, born of those practices meant to render enslaved Africans consumable, by seeking to cloak the abjectness of their condition and making them desirable. Here, once again, we observe practices for the aestheticisation of Black bodies (by oiling them, exhibiting them, etc.).

ASSIGNING RACIAL POSITIONS UNDER THE GUISE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

A similar racial arrangement (with the white cultures masking its role in the production of race, and the capture and appropriation of Black bodies to serve and support a White world) can today be seen in the cultural milieu, particularly when the latter seeks to interact with Black "minorities" and to pursue pro-diversity policies.[6]

Belgian cultural institutions have largely sought to fight the exclusions suffered by Black minority groups by lending "visibility" to the so-called ethnoracial minorities, their productions and works. More marked over the past few years, this approach consists of producing minority groups by seeking to escape colonial stereotypes, by debunking clichés concerning African, or by "decolonising imaginaries" – a canonical formulation that has become so rapidly popular as to raise suspicions. With our eyes on the stage spotlighting minorities, it is then easier to ignore what happens within these same institutions that are free to interpret and perform the problem of diversity as though they were not themselves concerned. However, stereotypes are not disembodied fantasies from afar, whose deconstruction would suffice to dismantle the narrative on race. If racial imaginaries operate, then they are necessarily corroborated by the ways in which institutions function. These imaginaries are active, for they find tangible translations within the very functioning of these institutions, including the manner in which they themselves internally arrange Black bodies.

Given the current racial glass-ceiling, illustrated by the fact that there are almost no Black persons occupying high-level positions, and in conjunction with the cultural milieu's controlling of Black political subjectivities, it is not surprising that Black bodies are themselves subject to a "usage relationship" (one of

appropriation). In other words, these Black bodies perform functions principally serving the concerns of a White world.

The following analyses are based upon observations and interviews carried out with members of cultural institutions and organisations linked to African and Afrodescendant cultural milieux in Brussels. These organisations and institutions are principally funded via development cooperation initiatives.[7] Observed recurrences in their manner of interacting with Black intermediaries (associations, artists, and cultural operators) have led me to identify three forms of Black-body appropriation (usage), resulting in a racial rigidification of the roles, statuses and resource apportionments within the cultural domain.[8] While these corporal captures and appropriations vary, occurring at different times and within different settings, they nevertheless converge and overlap to form a racialised system covering a large portion of the cultural milieu.

THREE TYPES OF BLACK-BODY USAGE RELATIONSHIPS

Visibility vs. Non-remuneration

With regards to cultural diversity, the usual institutional discourse consists of the institution announcing that they are lending greater visibility to the artistic productions of ethnic minorities (including Afrodescendants, as here). The first usage relationship is to be found in a form of blackmail based upon this goal of lending greater visibility: this laudable mission adopted by cultural institutions would seem to permit them to ignore the precarity of the solicited associations. Their precarity leads the institutions to deal with them via this very same precarity: in other words, via a circular system

of (de)valorisation that profits the cultural institutions.

It should be pointed out here that the reasons explaining the lack of subsidies for Afrodescendant associations are the very same reasons why they are solicited by cultural institutions. On the one hand, these associations are not subsidised because their ethnically-based composition is interpreted as "cultural differentialism", contrary to the principle of universality promoted by Belgium's French-speaking political establishment. On the other hand, these same associations are solicited by cultural institutions interested in benefitting from their competences within the Afrodescendant community. In other words, the precarity resulting from a state of non-recognition (lack of subsidies) is complemented by a new precarity engendered by policies for greater visibility. Because of the precarious status of Afrodescendant associations, these policies allow them to trade greater visibility for non-remuneration. The "association" categorisation naively gives the impression of a status expressly chosen, lacking professional ambition, and awaiting institutional promotion. However, it actually amounts to a duplicitous game in which cultural institutions profit from the downgrading or degradation of non-subsidised Afrodescendant associations.

This analysis helps explain how race is maintained. I would argue that for a racial relationship to be actualised at a certain location and time, this same racial relationship must already be active in other places, at other times. Thus, one racial relationship reinforces another, to form an ever more rigid system. In this regard, the same is true for race as for gender. The relationships of gendered domination at the workplace and within the family sphere operate hand in glove. Likewise, withholding subsidies from Afrodescendant associations creates a

"separate" status favouring the establishment of a racialised relationship within the cultural milieu.

This prolonged degradation – with the trading of visibility for non-remuneration maintaining the associations within this state of precarity – reduces policies for greater diversity to purely symbolic initiatives – or even to elements of a post-colonial relationship.

Ethnoracialisation and Interchangeability

Afrodescendant intermediaries (associations, artists, cultural operators, etc.) still largely fulfil the functions of target groups. In other words, cultural institutions are drawn to these intermediaries, not only for their offers, properly speaking, but also – and, occasionally, above all – for the fact that they represent a portion of the population that the institutions are otherwise incapable of reaching, or would like to reach in a certain way. This is made perfectly explicit within the framework of development cooperation, with African diasporas constituting intermediaries for raising awareness of global citizenship. This amounts to a mission that is assigned to Afrodescendant associations almost without their knowing. A great discrepancy exists, therefore, between the concerns of Afrodescendant associations and the reasons for their solicitation by cultural institutions. In other words, initiatives ostensibly for raising minority visibility may mask a host of heterogeneous, purely institutional concerns (raising Belgians' awareness of developmental issues, testing the artistic sensibility of a particular community, promoting institutional events among otherwise inaccessible population groups, and seeking to build bridges with new territories on the African continent, etc.). While such partnerships are not always completely instrumentalised, it nevertheless remains true that institutional

concerns are always far-removed from the diasporas' global emancipation goals, with the latter vigorously concealed by this discourse of "raising visibility".

In reality, the issues of concern to Afrodescendant groups are grafted onto those of the institutions, onto White-world concerns. This hints at the emergence of a Black-body usage relationship: a relationship prolonging the existence of race, insofar as, for the institutions, it more or less amounts to seizing upon any ethno-racialised group. This engenders a certain interchangeability that occasionally evolves into rivalry between Afrodescendant associations and between Black bodies.

Approved Profiles and Mediators vs. Radicals

As fully-fledged professionals, Blacks are almost absent from cultural institutions. This is evident at all levels, but especially prevalent among the upper echelons. However, this absence contrasts with the reinforced presence of Afrodescendants occupying positions that are in direct contact with the Afrodescendant target groups (associations, artists, and cultural operators). These workers present specific – including racial – characteristics (most often mixed-race, lacking extensive activist experience, etc.), allowing them to maintain contact with the target groups without "letting them in". They are expected to serve the same function as the caregivers observed at psychiatric hospitals by Erving Goffman, namely building buffers between the targeted populations and the institutions' central committees. This two-fold role consists of maintaining the proper proximity to and distance from Black bodies.

The Black-body usage relationship here operates on two levels. Sometimes it concerns

the proper profile, at other times it concerns – by differentiation – the mass of exterior Black bodies. On the one hand, logics of assimilation lead mediators to speak on behalf of White institutions, though without ever breaking the racial glass-ceiling (for the higher-ranked decision-makers remain White). On the other hand, the logics of differentiation place so-called Afrodescendant interlocutors outside these institutions, while being kept (as observed earlier) in inferior/precarious positions. Furthermore, this properly distant role (the right profile) effectively imposes a standard for how to interact correctly with the institution concerned. A role that normalises, that preformats these relationships, while also stigmatising differences by labelling them extreme.

This mediator role well illustrates the manner in which the colour-line-and-profiles game constitutes a Black-body usage relationship (a racial relationship) maintaining the institutions' internal power structures relatively intact.

LENDING VISIBILITY TO RACIAL CONFLICT: A MAJOR CHALLENGE

A great heterogeneity of factors operate together to maintain race: an overdetermined role attributed to Black bodies; a structural and material precarity engendering processes for greater visibility, while lacking monetary recognition; a racial glass-ceiling and an intermediary role, with the heart of the institution remaining inaccessible, in other words, a hostile and self-protective White world. This racial demarcation determines the distribution of resources (one function of race). Indeed, the subsidising powers lend legitimacy to the expertise of the institutions that underhandedly call upon Afrodescendant groups to serve as focus or target groups. Just as

women have demanded financial recognition for their work carried out within the reproductive sphere freely benefitting the productive sphere, these Afrodescendant groups are today demanding financial recognition for their activist-by-necessity work that benefits cultural institutions.[9] Here we have the politicisation of an Afrodescendant milieu. This airing of grievances by Afrodescendant groups lends visibility to the latent racial conflict that is only ever discussed behind the scenes.

RACIAL AS WELL AS POST-COLONIAL CAPTURE MECHANISMS

Whiteness is blind to itself and the groups are named via myriad euphemisms masking the racial question: diasporas, Afrodescendants, African associations, etc.[10] This racial conflict, latent and concealed, brings us back to Paul Gilroy. As with the interpretations of the Turner painting, this dodging or avoidance of the racial question makes it seem exterior to cultural institutions, when in reality this question concerns them directly and essentially. It thus remains ignored. Those pushing diversity policies exclude their own historic positions in attempting to comprehend the problem. The blindness of these diversity operators regarding their own positions is a contextual given of the White world, with which a Black world under construction must constantly deal and negotiate.

Furthermore, this same Black world must face at least two additional capture mechanisms that are post-colonial rather than strictly racial.

One particularity of Belgium's Afrodescendant cultural milieus is the historical link with federal development institutions and cultural cooperation NGOs. These connections are the result of several factors, notably connivances between the developmentalist milieu and African diasporas within Belgium.[11] These connections and collaborations are set against an ideological and diplomatic backdrop: a signal sent to the former colonised countries and international bodies that seeks to certify our having left colonialism behind (it is no longer politically correct to proceed "without Africans"). Upon this signal claiming change depends the very possibility of perpetuating relations with the former colonies in a manner that has naturally remained asymmetrical. One must consider this continued colonial relationship in order to understand, at least in part, relations with the so-called diasporas. In other words, development cooperation – as the new power regime succeeding colonisation – engendered new relations with first the Congo, then the diasporas. One must observe these collaborations between cultural institutions and Afrodescendant (diaspora) associations from a deep historical perspective: these collaborations are so unequal because of the unequal geopolitical relations with the African continent and its peoples.

Over the past few years, institutional development actors have begun networking with leading cultural institutions, building relations in the process generating opportunities within various fields (the sharing of knowledge, artistic information, artists' reputations, contacts within both Belgium and the former colonies, etc.). Rather than entering into collaborations with isolated institutions, Afrodescendant associations are absorbed into an ecosystem of institutions (which in turn compete among themselves). A nascent trend within "first-rate institutions" is for each to hold and benefit from its own "acquired" portion of the Afrodescendant diasporas. The Black world must therefore struggle with the latent conflictuality of cultural cooperation – and it is not in the particular interest of this milieu to allow the Black world internal freedom of expression and articulation.

CONCLUSION: INTERSTITIAL SOLIDARITIES IN FAVOUR OF A BLACK WORLD

The cultural domain is one of interwoven alliances between Afrodescendant associations and cultural institutions, all of which present themselves as allies of Black and Afrodescendant causes. They are able to do so thanks to an effective discourse focusing on the raising of Black/Afrodescendant visibility (with the diasporas otherwise lacking representation opportunities). But these alliances are all trapped, each in its own way, within a post-colonial ecosystem (the Black-body usage relationship, diplomatic relations with African countries, uniquely symbolic recognition processes, etc.). These institutions therefore constitute allies caught within these postcolonial relations. And they all pretend to act as allies, even though, for any real change to occur, they would have to alter their positions. Yet they often refuse to budge, preferring instead to retain their advantageous positions ensuring them dominance, legitimacy and recognition. For the Black world, continuing such "collaborations" constitutes a dead-end (the pursuit of post-colonial roles), while keeping a distance is dangerous with such "friends". It runs the risk of being labelled too radical.

For a Black world to emerge, these configurational spaces require interstitial solidarities.

1 The notion of "racialised" refers to the social relationships of race that categorise and hierarchise groups. Taken up once again over the course of the last ten years within the militant sphere in France and Belgium, the term is used by militant groups to designate themselves as a group suffering from forms of racial oppression. It is a way for these groups to de-essentialise the category of "ethnoracial minority" and to show the categorisation/hierarchisation processes at work. In the context of a continental Europe of colour-blindness (blind to race), the critical and political significance of this term is often misunderstood and confused with a category that would only have an identity or a self-affirmation dimension.

2 See, for instance, the article by Rafik Chekkar: "Ce que le mot « racisé » exprime et ce qu'il masque", published 6 November 2015 on the website *Etat d'exception*. https://www.etatdexception.net/ce-que-le-mot-racise-e-exprime-et-ce-quil-masque/

3 Article first published in 1993 and republished in 2012: Paul Gilroy, "Art of Darkness: Black Art and the Problem of Belonging to England", in Nicholas Mirzoeff (ed.), *The Visual Culture Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2012.

4 William T. Lhamon, *Peaux blanches, masques noirs: Performances du Blackface de Jim Crow à Michael Jackson*, Paris: Éditions de l'Éclat & Éditions Kargo, 2008.

5 Norman Ajari, "Du désir négrophilique. Arthur Jafa contre l'érotique coloniale de la masculinité noire", in *L'artiste noir, une figure violentée par la colonialité du savoir*, minoritArt, no. 3, April 2019.

6 This section on links between the Belgian cultural milieu and race is addressed in my doctoral thesis, which is currently in preparation and is provisionally entitled: "Déploiement d'un territoire artistique subsaharien à Bruxelles: les négociations d'une visibilité urbaine" (Université libre de Bruxelles, with funding from Innoviris).

7 Several interviews were carried out with staff members from the Belgian Ministry for Development Cooperation and various cultural institutions, notably the Royal Museum for Central Africa, Africalia, the NGO Coopération Education Culture and BOZAR.

8 These are typical ideals that help to understand recurring mechanisms, but should not be confused with a historical and singular understanding of each institution.

9 See the article by Sarah Demart, "Politiques de re-connaissance et tarification de l'expertise militante", in Justin M. Ndandu & Sarah Demart, *Dossier Diasporas*, Analysis no. 21, Éditions Kwandika de Bamko-Cran asbl.

10 The euphemising of the racial question within Belgian society has been evoked on multiple occasions by the anthropologist Nicole Grégoire.

11 See Nicole Grégoire, "Redéfinir les frontières de l'entre-soi en situation postmigratoire. Carrières associatives et construction d'un espace associatif « panafricain » à Bruxelles", in Jacinthe Mazzocchetti (ed.), *Migrations subsahariennes et condition noire en Belgique. A la croisée des regards*, Académia, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2014.

Geographies of Imagination
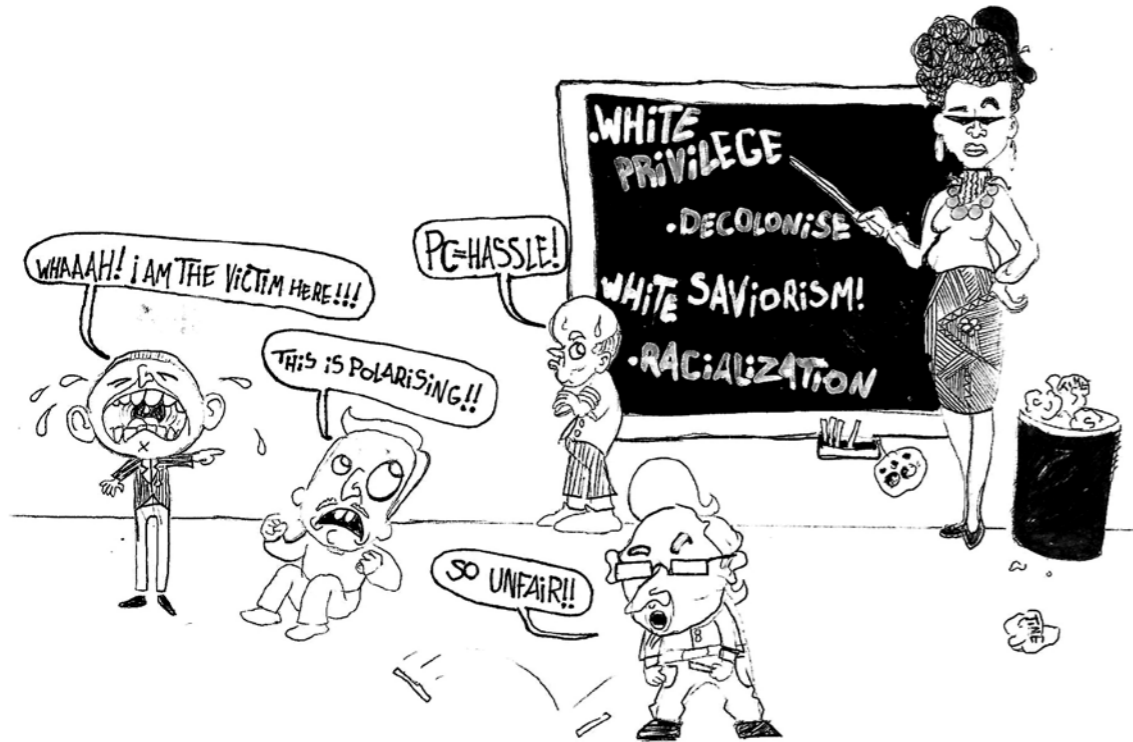
Co-curators Antonia Alampi and Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung, from SAVVY Contemporary, proposed as part of this project an exhibition aimed at deconstructing the "othering" practices at play in our societies.

"Through *Geographies of Imagination* we engage in confabulations to build connections between the varied and conflicting uses of imagination in constructing otherness and the role of geography as a tool of power. How is power situated at the core of processes of othering, and how are these processes connected to forms of belonging that we could also relate to notions of territoriality and possession? The other, writes Ta-Nehisi Coates, exists beyond the border of the great "belonging", something that contributed to producing the sense of anxiety that brought White, patriarchal supremacists of the far right to politically emerge again in recent elections, in the US as much as in several European countries".

This exhibition featured the following artists: Salwa Aleryani, Heba Y. Amin, American Artist, Rossella Biscotti, Chimurenga, Saddie Choua, Michele Ciacciofera, Anna Binta Diallo, Dimitri Fagbohoun, Mahir Jahmal, Jackie Karuti, Anna Lindal, Ibrahim Mahama, Tanja Muravskaja, Oscar Murillo, Daniela Ortiz and Sandra Schäfer.
It was presented at SAVVY Contemporary from 13 September to 11 November 2018, accompanied by a programme of performances, talks, readings on 14 September and a workshop "The ABC of Racist Europe" with Daniela Ortiz, on anti-racist methods and technologies of dis-othering, in children's perspectives and in children's activities, on 15 September.

Reproduced here is a press review noting the impact of the exhibition on exposing mechanisms of othering.

[The] airing of grievances by Afrodescendant groups lends visibility to the latent racial conflict
that is only ever discussed behind the scenes.
Véronique Clette-Gakuba.
Illustration by rapper Spitler.

IN A RACIST SOCIETY IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO BE NON-RACIST – WE MUST BE ANTI-RACIST

Angela Davis, Oakland, USA, 1979

CHIARA MARCHINI

'Geographies of Imagination' at Savvy Contemporary starts with a long underground corridor leading to the main exhibition space at silent green, the former crematorium that now houses the gallery in Berlin-Wedding. The exhibition title is reminiscent of the notions of "imagined geographies" and "imagined communities" coined, respectively, by Edward Said and Benedict Anderson, forty and thirty-five years ago. The walls of what is usually just a passage-way, a non-space on the way to the gallery, are marked for this exhibition with black ink: tracing a vast historical landscape of "imagined geographies". These range from territorial claims, as in the treaty of Tordesillas of 1494, in which the Spanish and Portuguese divided the world into a Spanish and a Portuguese half, through to the founding of such alliances as the European and African Unions. The timeline ends above the entrance to the gallery with recent milestones involving Germany and the EU investing in African states to halt the flow of Europe-bound migrants.

Accompanying the visitor's mental and physical journey along the timeline is the sound of clapping hands, coming from the video *Maps* (2012) by Anna Binta Diallo. Through a montage of filmed images of maps and home-video footage, it charts the journey of the artist's family from one former colony to another: from Senegal, West Africa, to Manitoba, a prairie province of Canada, across the Atlantic ocean, in what could be read as a retracing of the infamous Middle Passage. The fast rhythm of the hands clapping encapsulates the at once collective and private dimensions of the narrative of land demarcation and the relocation or people, voluntary or involuntary, that is presented. The sound is both reminiscent of children's play, and drill-like, suggesting the relentless pace of history or the speed at which Western societies expect integration of migrants to happen.

As the curators Antonia Alampi and Bonaventure Ndikung lay out in the exhibition handout, 'Imagined Geographies' is not another art exhibition pointing to the need for Western art institutions to expand their geographical scope to include artists from the Southern hemisphere. Instead, at a deeper level, the show draws attention to the very mechanisms of "othering" inherent to the projections of "imagined geographies". These are not limited to territorial conquest, but continue to be effective well into post-colonial

societies of the 21st Century. Moreover, as the curators point out, acts of "othering" are not restricted to geo- or national politics, but also happen at the level of individual interactions. The curators' point of departure is the two-fold recognition that these processes are alive and well, both in society at large and in art institutions—not least in the form of "African" or "Arab world" shows that have proliferated in Western art institutions in recent decades—in order to then call for an antidote in the form of acts of "dis-othering".

For dis-othering to work, the curators explain, there needs first to be a recognition of these processes and then each individual must resist succumbing to the "othering" to which they are subjected, and in turn resist the urge to belittle, or "other" others. The fundamental pre-requisite for dis-othering, then, is empathy: only if you feel what it means to have been othered (on the basis of race, gender, class, or other constructed categories), will you be able to resist perpetuating the process, even at the cost of discomfort. Citing Octavia Butler's 1993 novel *Parable of the Sower*, the curators call for an empathy able to embrace "all conditions of the world".

In the central gallery space, on opposite walls, two series of photographs address the way in which senses of belonging or not belonging are constructed. In *Estonian race* (2010–11) by Tanja Muravskaja the heads of young white men with their hair shorn, all photographed at the same angle, are aligned like soldiers. A fictitious, but all the more potent, idea of a homogenous "race" rooted in the Estonian territory is presented, from which by definition all but bio-Estonian viewers are excluded. By contrast, on the opposite wall, the series *They don't care about us* (2016) by Mahir Jahmal—quoting Michael Jackson's 1995 anti-discrimination hit song—can be read as illustrations of self-othering, or the internalization of othering, as experienced by people of African descent living in Western societies. Full-body black and white photographs show young black men donning clothes and poses drawn from hip hop, covering up and dissimulating more than showing themselves. The artist, who was born and raised in Austria, has crumpled and re-photographed the original photographs, adding to the effect of occlusion.

Am I the only one who is like me? (2017) by Saddie Choua presents a seemingly ubiquitous, unstoppable flow of media images perpetuating stereotypes ingrained in Western society, on TV sets on the floor: white politicians and film actors making unreflected comments; an all-white, all-male roster of singers on stage at the 1985 London Live Aid Concert. The naturalisation of racism carried forward by these TV images is subtly sabotaged by text superimposed on them, reproducing everyday "othering" remarks presumably experienced by the artist, who grew up in Belgium. Blasting from the installation is the hip hop song 'Black Stacey' (2004), which can be heard throughout the gallery, in which the singer Saul Williams calls for an opening up about one's own vulnerability. The lyrics are reminiscent of

Cherrie Moraga's argument, in her 1981 text 'La Güera' cited by the curators, in favour of "an emotional, heartfelt grappling with the source of our own oppression [...] within ourselves and outside of us".

The opening of the exhibition in mid-September coincided with a series of violent anti-immigrant protests in the city of Chemnitz, among others, which sent shockwaves across German politics, society and media. While in the German media anti-foreigner sentiments, particularly manifest in the regions of the former GDR, are classically explained with reference to the economic downturn in those regions, as Paul Mecheril argues, presenting this link as natural is a fatal mistake. By placing the mechanisms of "othering" in a larger historical context, on the one hand, and urging for strategies of "dis-othering" based on unflinching, necessary exercises in empathy, on the other, 'Geographies of Imagination' goes beyond illustrating the problems and presents important tools toward their solution.
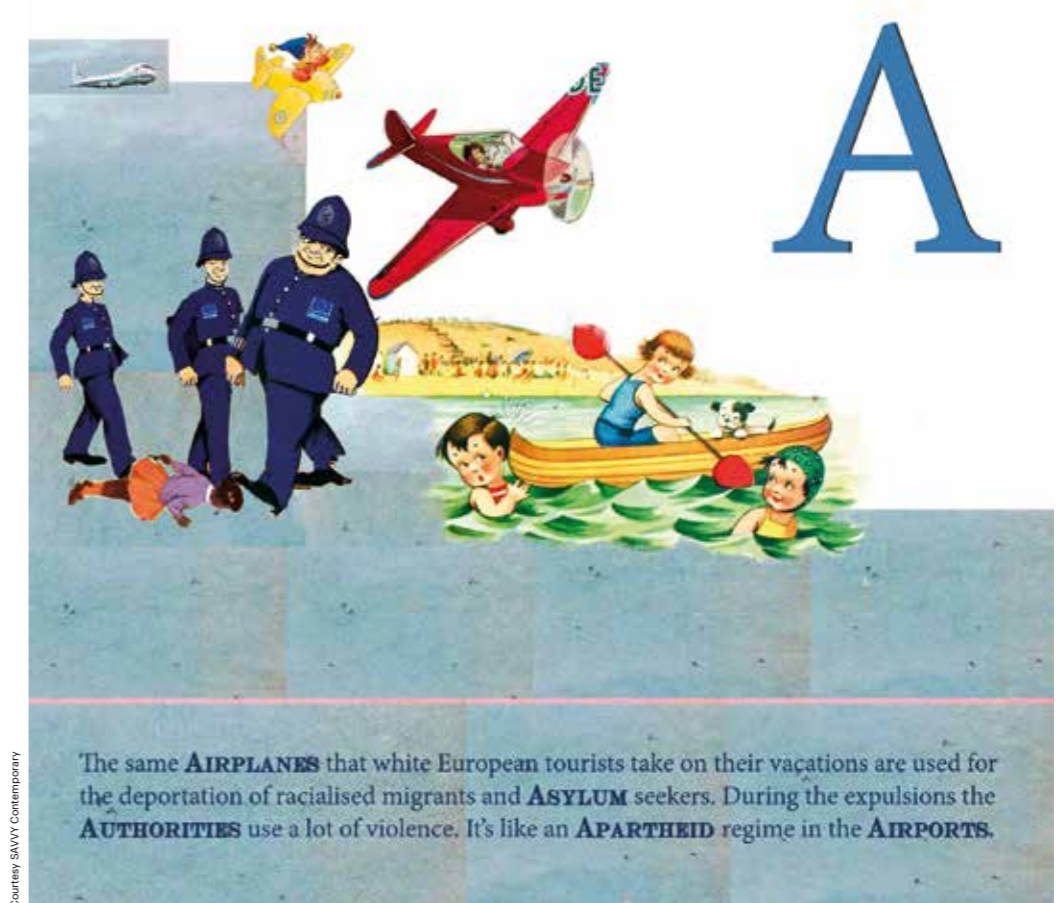
HOW CAN WE FIND A SENSE OF BELONGING THAT EMBRACES ALL THE CONDITIONS OF THE WORLD?

bell hooks

The same **AIRPLANES** that white European tourists take on their vacations are used for the deportation of racialised migrants and **ASYLUM** seekers. During the expulsions the **AUTHORITIES** use a lot of violence. It's like an **APARTHEID** regime in the **AIRPORTS**.

Courtesy SAVVY Contemporary

Daniela Ortiz, *The ABC of Racist Europe.*

Photos Raisa Galofre & Kathleen Louw. Courtesy Savvy Contemporary
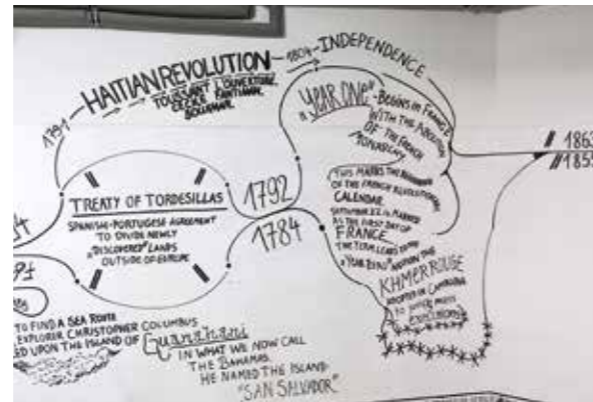
Photo Kathleen Louw. Courtesy SAVVY Contemporary

Timeline hand-drawn by Boris Dewjatkin and Christopher Krause

Tanja Muravskaja, *Estonian Race* (2010-2011).

Photo Kathleen Louw. Courtesy SAVVY Contemporary

Ibrahim Mahama, *Decapitated clay bust of Belgian explorer Constant De Deken.*

Photo Kathleen Louw. Courtesy SAVVY Contemporary

New Cartographies,
Exerpts from the Chirumenga Chronic, 2015-Ongoing.

Photo: Kathleen Louw. Courtesy SAVVY Contemporary

© kulturen in bewegung

Mahir Jahmal,
They don't care about us (2016).

Debate in Austria.

© Fabian Dankl

© kulturen in bewegung
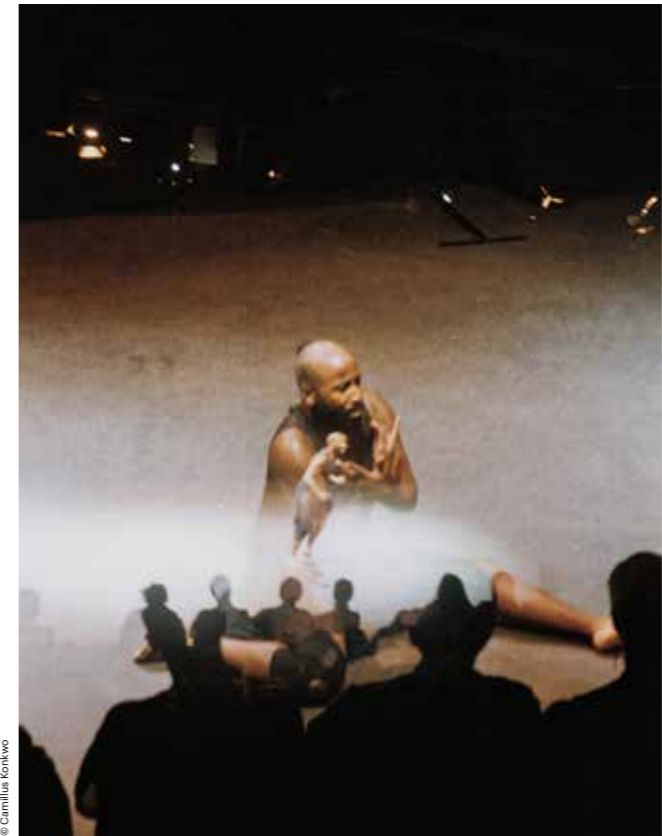
© Camillus Konkwo

Jumoke Sanwo

Workshop Enesi M.

Reflect Festival. Mzamo Nondlwana

© kulturen in bewegung

© kulturen in bewegung

Reflect Festival. Elisabeth Tambwe

Reflect Festival. Issam

© Chris Morris

Amina Jama

© Chris Morris

Bernadine Evaristo

Caryl Phillips

Linton Kwesi Johnson

Johny Pitts

© Chris Morris

© BOZAR

Tete Michel Kpomassie

Listening to Caryl Phillips reading

© BOZAR

Performance by Marie Daulne aka ZAP MAMA

© Chris Morris

Roger Robinson

Panel « The Making of »
on the challenges in collaborations between
cultural institutions and partners

Sibo Kanobana (UGent), Nicole Grégoire (ULB),
Véronique Clette-Gakuba (ULB), Naomi Ntakiyica
(BOZAR), Kathleen Louw (BOZAR)
Moderator: Omar Ba

Photo Lyse Ishimwe © BOZAR

Panel on the 'Making of' the Symposium.

Photo Lyse Ishimwe @ BOZAR

Panel on artists & institutions collaborations.

@ BOZAR

IKRAM

Photo Lyse Ishimwe © BOZAR

BluLand.

Poster designed by Alexey Klyuykov

CULTURAL STRATEGIES THAT CAN SHIFT THE DISPOSITIONS OF POWER. THAT'S WHAT I AM INTERESTED IN

Stuart Hall, 2009
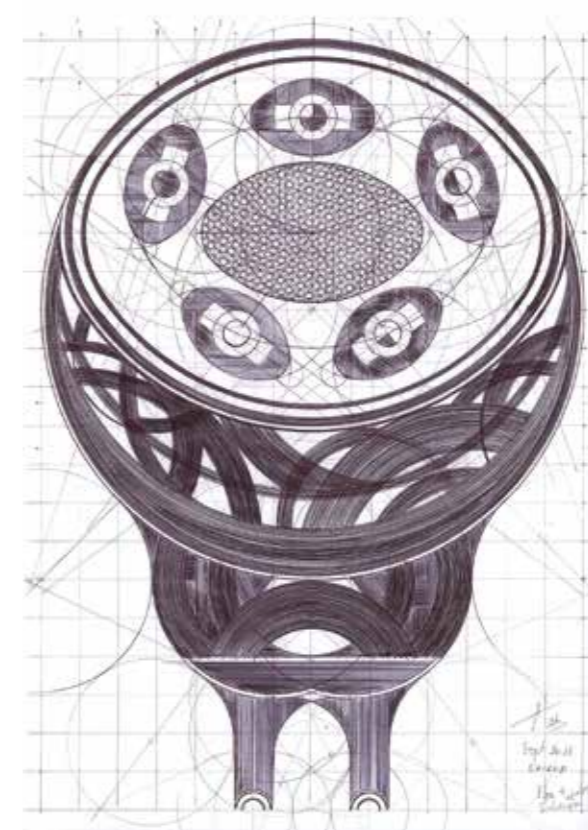
Courtesy of the artist and Trampoline Gallery, Antwerp

Fig. 6
Jean Katambayi, *Afrolampes*, 2018
Series of 10 drawings, pen on paper

Courtesy of the artist

Fig. 3
Nelson Makengo, *Nuit Debout*, 2019.
Installation of photomontage,
video (colour, sound, 20 mins.), and objects

Fig. 4
Sinzo Aanza, *Pertinences Citoyennes*, 2018
8 photographs, video projection
(colour, sound, 4h. 13 mins.) and objects

Courtesy of the artist

Fig. 1
Georges Senga, *Cinéma*, 2018
A series of 6 photographs printed on matte paper

Courtesy of the artist

Fig. 2
Georges Senga, *Vendeurs de rue*, 2018
A series of 3 photographs printed on auto-adhesive Innova YouTac

Fig. 5
Pélagie Gbaguidi, *Dé-fossilisation du regard.*
Dialogue avec la Madonna del Parto, 2018
(Pigment on cotton)

Fig. 6
Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum, *Do your Worst*, 2018
(Pencil and acrylic on wood panel)

MULTIPLE TRANSMISSIONS: ART IN THE AFROPOLITAN AGE"

Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Imane Farès, Paris

Fig. 8
Emeka Ogboh, *Spirit and Matter*, 2017–18
Light-and-sound installation with three photographs printed on stained-
glass and mounted on lightboxes

CRITICAL SPACES

CRITICAL SPACES

Let's talk about Dis-Othering

MARIA HEROLD AND MARISSA LOBO

From the beginning, Kulturen in Bewegung decided to approach the topic of dis-othering with young audiences and/or partners. The institution organised discussion sessions to take place in the three Austrian cities of Graz, Linz and Vienna under the banner "Let's talk about Dis-Othering". The purpose was to bring together artists, curators, and representatives from cultural institutions and smaller organisations from the cultural sector to share their thoughts on the current state of "Othering" within Austrian cultural institutions and society at large.

From the discussion sessions "Let's talk about Dis-Othering" and from the contributions of guest panellists, a number of different initial interpretations started to emerge of exactly what "Othering" and "Dis-Othering" might mean, not least because there are no appropriate translations into German of this term, nor is everyone aware of such terms, what they refer to, or the need to talk about "Othering" as an issue. Secondly, the point was made that "Othering" is something that happens within cultural institutions, not only at the level of programming, but also at the level of programme conception, that is to say, the question that needs to be asked is who are the people consuming the programmes, and who is working within the cultural institutions and in which positions?

To underline the need to open up cultural spaces and institutions, we started each discussion session by explaining to the audience and panellists the connected *Mapping Diversities* project being conducted in parallel in various Austrian cultural institutions (see Chapter Mapping Diversities) as a way of inviting representatives from cultural institutions to take part in this mapping exercise.

It was not always easy to find cooperation partners outside Vienna for the discussion sessions. Unfortunately, our plan for a discussion in Lower Austria, reaching out to institutions in St. Pölten and Krems, ended in failure. The institutional representatives in that region had neither the time nor interest in the topic. One of the answers received from one institution was that the topic "didn't fit with the work of their cultural department, but that we should try it at their department for migration".

Therefore, instead of a planned fourth discussion, we supported a panel discussion about "The Image of Africa in the Austrian Diaspora", organised by Aquea Lamptey (Art Seeks Communication) and the new "Salon Souterrain" created by Elisabeth Bakambamba Tambwe (Château Rouge) and Lena Fankhauser ((Ch)AMBER- Association for New Chamber Music) at the Künstlerhaus 1050 in Vienna. (This discussion is reported further down).

131

LET'S TALK ABOUT DIS-OTHERING #1

The first discussion in the series "Let's talk about Dis-Othering" took place in Graz at the Postgarage Café in cooperation with the Center for Contemporary Art.

In her keynote address, **JUMOKE SANWO** (artist and curator from Lagos), highlighted the challenges of neo-colonisation on the countries' political and institutional structures, the cultural practices shaping new narratives in the city of Lagos, art as a catalyst for integration, and public discourse and engagement through spoken word, poetry and archiving. Sanwo also spoke about her work as creative director of the Revolving Art Incubator and about the growing impact of artist-led alternative art spaces shaping the cultural narrative in Lagos.

Panellists spoke about their work in the cultural field and how "Othering" is present in their work or daily life. As one example, **SAMSON OGIAMIEN** (sculptor and visual artist) told the story of when he was coming to Austria and got asked if he could do drumming workshops, even though he had never played drums. Purely based on his appearance, people assumed that he could play drums because he was Black. While this story took place years ago and the city has changed a bit in the meantime, he emphasised that there is still a lot to do.

VERONIKA DREIER (chairwoman of BAODO), the leader of an association which runs the intercultural art space and café NIL, in Graz, referred to the difficult financial situation facing the association, which is also connected to the current political situation in Graz and Styria and her desire to forge better cooperation with bigger institutions such as the Kunsthaus Graz or Steirischer Herbst.

BARBARA STEINER (head of the Kunsthaus Graz) was open to cooperation in the future and was critical of structural guidelines that make it difficult to change institutional structures, but said that she is also aware of the need to raise awareness within the institution when it comes to the diversification of staff.

EKATERINA DEGOT (director and chief curator of Steirischer Herbst), who was very new to the city of Graz, spoke about the curatorial process for her first Steirischer Herbst programme (2018): "Volksfronten". She explained her ambition for the autumn programme, which had a strong local and historical connection to the city of Graz, and dealt with topics like nationalism and racism.

LET'S TALK ABOUT DIS-OTHERING #2

The second talk took place in Linz in cooperation with the GFK Gesellschaft für Kulturpolitik (Upper Austria), as part of the Afrofuturisms Festival organised by Sandra Kramplhuber/Stadtwerkstatt.

MARIE EDWIGE HARTIG (chair of the Verein Jaapo, politician) pointed out that she is confronted with "Othering" in her daily life and that "Otherness" and being "othered" is the common shared experience of Jaapo (an Association for Black Women). She also emphasised that People of the African Diaspora are as diverse as Austrian society, but aren't perceived as such and are confronted with a lot of stereotypes. She went on to say that the lack of representation of Black people and people of colour within Austrian culture makes it very difficult for them to feel part of the culture.

Having previously lived for many years in New York and Austria, **IHU ANYANWU** (musician, performing artist) explained that since she had moved to Nigeria, she had started using the term "White space", because she now has this understanding of "Black space" and "White space", and Blackness within "White space", and Blackness within "Black space". Anyanwu also mentioned what a privilege it is to be in your own space. The question of the "Other" within Black space, Anyanwu said, is more about access and a lack of access: access to technology, access to information, and access to education. Anyanwu also talked about the "White gaze" on the "Other" within the cultural field and that if you allow yourself to participate in this cultural system as an object and take that label, the path is probably easier, but it's detrimental to your identity and integrity as an artist.

MANUELA NAVEAU (artist and curator of Ars Electronica Linz) pointed out the problem of using categories, which are mostly excluding, and how important it is to question these categories in order to generate access. Naveau also talked about the state of "Othering" within the Ars Electronica Center, especially within the Ars Electronica Export department where she works, and admitted that there was still a lot to do within the institution and that it's important to remain sensitive to the issue.

HEMMA SCHMUTZ (director of the Museums of the City of Linz) talked about barriers within museums when it comes to art purchasing, where she has to deal with the issues of legal requirements. One of the requirements is that the art pieces must be purchased from Austrian galleries and from artists living in Austria. This limits the range of what she is able to buy. Schmutz was

reflecting on big exhibitions, such as, for example, exhibitions on "Chinese Art" or "Indian Art", and said that they are not so common anymore and that it's more important right now to establish artists on the international market, beyond these labels. On the other hand, she also mentioned the pressure related to visitor numbers, especially in bigger institutions, which limit her programming possibilities in comparison with smaller institutions.

"THE TOPIC DOESN'T FIT THE WORK OF [OUR] CULTURAL DEPARTMENT, TRY [OUR] DEPARTMENT FOR MIGRATION"

from the *Mapping Diversity* interviews or surveys,
comment kept anonymous

The third discussion was organised in cooperation with Kunsthalle Wien and was part of the Vienna Art Week.

The keynote address by **HELENA ERIBENNE** (multimedia artist) referred to her play about time travel, identity, and fear of the future: "When the world comes to an end, move to Vienna, because everything happens there 20 years later" (Gustav Mahler). When Eribenne first came to Vienna, her initial impression was that she had actually travelled in time, back to 1974. She said that she could get a sense of what her parents went through in London in the '60s and '70s by being in Vienna. Even people on the contemporary art scene were unable to get past the colour of her skin. At times she also felt that there was "the good Black person", from the States or the UK, and the "not good enough Black person", the one who comes directly from Africa. She ended her keynote with a look into the future: "I welcome the day when race and gender are of no importance at all – when I don't have to do identity politics in my work in order to strive for equality, but simply focus on my artistic expression. I'm looking forward to the day when Vienna is once again in pole position as a leading city in art and sciences as it once was when Gustav Mahler was alive. I'm looking forward to the day when people say, 'When the world comes to an end, move to Vienna because everything is happening there now.'"

ELISABETH BAKAMBAMBA TAMBWE (performance artist, Château Rouge), is a performer whose plastic and choreographic work addresses the construction of identity , mono vs. multi-belonging, and the perpetually evolving nature of perceptions. She was asked about her experience of "Othering" in European cultural institutions. Tambwe sees her position as already quite "transgressive", by being herself she is already questioning the "Other", because she is an artist, a woman, and Black, and also because she is working in an art field, which is basically quite White. In her experience, programming is often done in an "easy" way, wherein the artist is chosen more for the colour of their skin than for what the art work is about, and that this also happens for economic reasons, because when you can say you have a Black woman at your event, it is easier for the promoter to sell it to the audience, or to funding agencies. Tambwe pointed out that this creates the feeling that your skin is turning into a kind of jail, and stated that being Black is not the job of the artist.

CHRISTOPH SLAGMUYLDER (director, Wiener Festwochen) also referred to the representation of Black people and people of colour within the cultural scene and he thinks that we are in a moment right now where there is much more representation of artists of colour in the programme than was the case several

years ago. He also said, however, that it's not by chance that they are in these programmes now. They are also there to repair the many years of ignorance and disinterest and are now being invited to illustrate just how open we actually are in Western society. Slagmuylder stated that many institutions were going through a particularly difficult passage just at the moment and when asked if he thought that the process of diversification was important, he said that it was necessary, and that there was no other way to proceed. He also stressed the importance of constantly questioning our institutions in pursuit of renewal.

When it came to the question of what art can do in deconstructing "Othering" practices, **VANESSA JOAN MÜLLER** (head of dramaturgy, Kunsthalle Wien) described the contemporary art world as a privileged sphere for tension and that we should take advantage of that and use it in order to strengthen the debate on "Dis-Othering". It would be important to get our audience to think about it and to make them aware that we can only collectively reflect and work on it. She also pointed out that it is not actually the task of art to solve this problem and that it is in fact an institutional and structural problem: "It's we who are to blame, the curators, the programmers, the cultural politicians, etc. We should look to find more financial resources, but also encourage institutions to do so, and give them more space for discussion and discourse".

SUZANNA FUTTERKNECHT (exhibition management, MAK) analysed the structural problem in institutions and said that in larger institutions it's more likely that people of colour will be excluded. As she is working within a bigger institution, she can testify that it is still the case that some people find it hard to imagine that she might be working in such a position, and tend to assume that she is an artist, or a guard, for example. Futterknecht believes that being excluded on an institutional level is a reflection of our society and that a next step to working against "Othering" within this field would be inclusion.

THE IMAGE OF AFRICA IN THE AUSTRIAN DIASPORA - WHO SPEAKS FOR WHOM?

KUNSTLERHAUS 1050, VIENNA
MAY 21, 2019

This event took the recent film *Welcome to Sodom* (2018, Austria) as a starting point to explore the negative image of the motherland and its inhabitants vehicled within Austrian civil society. This topic has been addressed by various African organisations in Austria numerous times before, but unfortunately without satisfactory results to date.

The discussion was made all the more relevant after the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education's inclusion, in December 2018, of a film considered "poverty porn" (depicting defenceless or vulnerable people of our societies in their suffering due to poverty, mental illness, sickness, etc., for the consumption of privileged audiences in the Global North), on their list of recommendations for Austrian school teaching materials.
This panel discussion was the opportunity to reactivate productive relationships between citizens of Austrian and African origins who want to see change happen (inside the school curriculum and beyond), as well as those authorities having the power to do so.

CHRISTA MARKOM presented her academic research findings published in *Die Anderen im Schulbuch* (The Others in the School Book, Christa Markom / Heidi Weinhäupl, 2008), demonstrating how the African continent has been historically portrayed in a discriminatory and racist way in Austrian (school) text books. While working on the book her positive interactions with school book publishers strengthened her belief that there is a genuine interest on the part of decision makers to implement proposals to correct this situation.

YANN W. TANOÉ shared his strategies on how achievements of the African continent can be/are being implemented in school curricula. In the United Kingdom, the ministry of education pays special attention to the inclusion of Africans and overall, on the topic of diversity in the school system, Yann encourages students and their parents to alert their school authorities about cultural misinformation found in school books.

VANESSA SPANBAUER identified in research the three ways Black people are generally portrayed within the Austrian mainstream media : as a) criminals, b) sex workers and sexual objects, or c) having a connection with the entertainment business, for example, as artists, athletes, etc. Africans are talked about from a euro-centric perspective without granting people of African heritage the possibility to represent themselves. In order to change this, more diversity needs to be included in media editorial offices.

DENISE VAN DE CRUZE questioned the integrity of the film-making process surrounding the film *Welcome to Sodom*, the controversial "poverty porn" film set in Accra. Because the filmmakers are refusing to show the movie in Ghana, it is unclear whether or not the protagonists really said what was recorded in a voice-over done in Vienna in post-production. In addition, the personal rights of a man who was identified as being gay and a transgender girl were violated.

SIMON INOU says there is a structural problem in the way school teachers are educated, as they are not trained on the subject of anti-discriminatory behaviour, racism and diversity. His positive experiences on an individual level with teachers and principals has fuelled his belief that we as a society can successfully work together in order to change the prevailing negative picture of Africans in Austrian (school) text books.

REMEMBER 100 YEARS. WHAT ABOUT NOW? SALON SOUTERRAIN

The first issue of Salon Souterrain was presented by Elisabeth Bakambamba Tamwe and Lena Fankhauser, as a concept from Chateau Rouge (an interdisciplinary underground art Space) in response to the unbridled accentuation of exclusionary dynamics. Salon Souterrain includes other people's voices and dives into different approaches towards knowledge, offering a place of hospitality, a melting pot of people, styles, ideas and a modest path towards the systematic practice of dialogue. This first issue entitled "Remember, 100 years of women's right to vote… What about now?" addressed the absence of voting rights for minorities women not born in Austria or Europe. It closed with a performance called "Fuck Codes and Containment" by Eric Abrogoua, an art installation by God's Entertainment/ Karl Wratschko and a DJ Set by Flo Real.

R E F L E C T FESTIVAL

The multi-disciplinary R E F L E C T Festival, which took place at WUK Vienna in September 2019, was the highlight and the closing event of our activities, questioning the process of cultural "Othering" and focusing on the topics of self-reflection, self-love, identity and community. It was presented for and with diverse youth groups and included a symposium co-organised with the youth group Schwarze Frauen Community (SFC), as well as workshops for adults and children. The festival was curated by Tonica Hunter, Maria Herold, and Marissa Lôbo.

The symposium and performative exhibition gathered a range of young people including experts, artists and cultural workers to talk about the topics of self-reflection, self-love, and "Othering". We listened, spoke, visualised and learned about (or unlearned) practices of "Othering". We also brought together positions and references that are engaged in antiracist strategies through art activism, theory and community-building. The symposium was moderated by Emily Akugbe Olowu and Iyabo Sadatu Binder from the SFC youth group.

The symposium opened with *It Remains Untitled*, a very personal and captivating dance performance by **IMANI RAMESES** (performance artist), in which objects were broken and thrown around the room with strong movements. Imani Rameses said of her performance that she didn't see herself as a Black artist, but rather as an artist, who is Black. Although Blackness is part of her work, it is neither a catalyst nor the reason why she wants to feel and understand movement in its ontology.

BELINDA KAZEEM (artist, writer) delivered an inspiring keynote with a reflection on the position of the "Other" in the national psyche and pointed to ways of refusing 'Otherisation' and in so doing, diving into explorations of self. "Othering" is a central mechanism of exclusion that aims at targeting specific groups of people, thereby creating the so-called 'Others'. "I believe that if we acknowledge 'Othering' as something inherent in Western and Austrian society, it can politicise and focalise us. So perhaps if we put down our 'White spectacles', we can cultivate self-love and respect for people of colour." Belinda Kazeem hopes that we might stop desiring to be accepted by a system that operates by oppressing and exploiting the "Others", and which has never thought about the other's development and well-being.

HENRIE DENNIS (activist, curator and founder of Afro Rainbow Austria), talked about structural discrimination from the perspective of a queer Black African migrant and discussed how resistance and protest could serve as an intergenerational tool to disrupt and break down those structures: "Structural discrimination is difficult to define and talk about. It's a powerful force that inhibits access to justice, progress, freedom of movement and it's almost invisible".

NITIN BHAROSA (cultural theorist and writer) gave a lecture about self-care and self-love as a form of resistance. Nitin discussed how "Othering" is influencing people of colour on how they think and feel about themselves and showed how self-love and self-care can nourish one's own self-determined sense of self. In terms of solidarity, community and collective, he emphasised that people of colour should encourage each other and try not to make other people feel small or overwhelm them, leaving them without sufficient energy to react and make sure that everyone's feelings are seen as worthy.

KAREN MICHELSEN CASTAÑÓN (visual artist and art educator) shared her collective and personal experiences in mixed-media projects with young people and projects addressing borders. She discussed using the writing of personal and collective histories as ways to counter neo-colonial ideologies in educational material.

MARISSA LOBO (artist, curator) presented *Do You Know What my Superpowers Are?* a project conducted with a group of young women during the Wiener Festwochen/Into the City 2019, in which the participants created new images to strengthen self-confidence and enable a break with universalising conventions.

The performative exhibition featured several guest artists: **JORDAN LINDINGER ASAMOAH** read original poems about fantasy and reality, being yourself, success and failure, and a poem dedicated to Sade Stöger and Persy Lowis Bulayumi from SFC Jugendcorner. **JUA GUTSA** presented self-painted clothes with a series of photographs of those wearing them. **SERA CHIOMA AHAMEFULE** presented self-portraits in pencil with glued-on hair labelled "This artwork is fragile – don't touch my hair". **MIYABA CELINE MBWISI** hung up her a painting on canvas showing the outline of a semi-profile filled with personal words and feelings. **IYABO SADATU BINDER** revealed a piece on canvas with the shape of the African continent assembled from broken mirror glass. **TOBIAS KOGLER** recited poetry on stage, about the meaning of art. **MAYRA KIKI DIOP** performed a song called "Insecurity Written-Down".

> "For me, my art is that I wrote this two hours ago
> For me my art is that I stand here and
> share my thoughts, energy and vibration…
> What was your art today?"

ADIA TRISCHER presented a contemporary short film programme, including Jeannette Ehlers' *Black Bullets*, Elisha Leverock-Smith's *Miss Black Germany*, Janicza Bravo's *Man Rots Head*, and a *Showcase* from The Golden Pixel Cooperative. This selection aimed to champion the quirky, the fantastical and the surreal, as well as those brave enough to make work that is not always understood. The screenings were rounded up with an artist talk by Lydia Nsiah from The Golden Pixel Cooperative, which is a nomadic platform originating from Vienna.

THE FESTIVAL ALSO FEATURED TWO DANCE PERFORMANCES, A MUSIC PROGRAMME, WORKSHOPS, SINGING AND READINGS.

Alley of his Majesty… BLACK SWAN, by **MZAMO NONDLWANA**, explored identity through the lens of the colonial gaze and the cultural context, using personal memory as a reference, with repetitive movements used to modify perception and deliver different states.

ABSTRACTION, by **ELISABETH TAMBWE** presented a transformative performance in which the performer's appearance was constantly changing. Society obliges the individual to start to develop an identity at birth: name, surname, and all the identity-forming attributes that come from the individual's history, their social background and relationships in it. This totality forms the universal framework of the individual's imposed identity. Just like a caterpillar that wraps itself into a cocoon, a new, grotesque form appears – a reinvented, abstract and confused body onto which we project our own interpretations.

The music programme featured **DALIA AHMED**, host of the weekly Radio FM4 show "Dalia's Late Night Lemonade", where she presents hip-hop, R'n'B, Dancehall, Afropop, and global club tunes. The programme included: **BADNBOUJEE**, known as Austria's first all-Black, all-female DJ collective, founded by the Viennese born and raised Elisabeth Mtasa and Enyonam Tetteh-Klu, throwing inclusive parties, irrespective of skin colour, gender or sexuality; **ISSAM**, who was making his Austria debut that evening, born and based in Casablanca, and known for his distinctive blend of auto-tuned Trap and Moroccan sounds, accompanied by visuals and his DJ Ham Robati; and the Manchester-based Austrian electronic producer Salute, with his 'Condition' mixtape, dealing with the different stages of grieving – memories, pain, and the beginning of the feeling of hope.

Workshops for young and old included: "Wearing Resistance" presented by **NENE SURREAL**, and "Body Love Movement" presented by **MZAMO NONDLWANA**, teaching graffiti techniques T-shirt design, and the use of movement as a healing practice and as a way to challenge limitations through physicality and imagination; "Lalala", a Children's workshop with **ANI GANZALA**, a Black Brazilian graffiti artist and activist, inviting children to explore "How I am and feel in the world of watercolour" and engaged them in the creative process of producing self-portraits in tune with the theme of living with differences, and the importance of their own self-image and references; and "Performing ways of being with each other" by **KAREN MICHELSEN CASTAÑÓN** on identifying potential ways of being together and creating with each other in the knowledge of living in a racist system of exclusion and violence.

MAPU HUNI KUIN and **BISMANI HUNI KUIN** – the heads of the Centro Huwã Karu Yuxibu in Acre, Brazil – sang songs of the Huni Kuin people, as well as authorial songs in their mother tongue, hãtxa kuin, and in Portuguese, offering

a musical experience full of stories, to raise awareness of young and old on the preservation of the Amazon forest and on the contemporaneity of indigenous knowledge beyond the European exotic imaginary. And **LUISA LOBO** read from the book *Kabá Darebu* by the indigenous Brazilian writer Daniel Munduruku, about the situation of indigenous people in Brazil.

In closing, the exhibition by **VERENA MELGAREJO WEINANDT** *Leyendo Resistencia/ Widerstand lesen/ Reading Resistance* proposed a very essential recommendation of opening up to other knowledge systems: "Reading stories about the connection of indigenous communities to nature, to understand why they have defended their country with such vehemence for centuries and why they have made a non-capitalist value of water, wind and sun comprehensible. Making the fight of the ancestors against colonial supremacy understandable in the supposedly mythical stories of indigenous communities, which are still politically explosive to this day".

Looking B(l)ack

JOHNY PITTS

In the summer of 1973, a young journalist adorned with what he would later describe as "gold-rimmed cool blue shades and a bodacious Afro" rented out on old Ford and embarked upon a road trip through the South of France that involved three of the most powerful figures in the last century of African American history. Those three people comprised the young journalist himself, an elderly woman who was at the time facing bankruptcy, and a gay, middle-aged man suffering from something of an identity crisis. They were respectively at the centre of three legendary movements in African American history: the Harlem Renaissance, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Black Academic boom of the latter half of the twentieth century that helped to usher in the era that gave us Barack Obama. They were Henry Louis Gates Jnr, Josephine Baker, and James Baldwin.

Gates was on assignment with *Time* magazine, and picked Baker up in Monaco, where the dancer had made friends and was living with the Princess of Monaco, while in the midst of fighting her way back to solvency with nostalgic gigs for rich, old French dignitaries. Together, Gates and Baker headed north through Provence, and what should have been a 30-minute drive took much longer, because as soon as she was spotted, Baker was regularly being mobbed by fans. Baker responded with the elegant grace of a seasoned old pro, and if she was used to the attention, as a celebrity in her twilight years, she was also somewhat grateful for it. Finally, the car wound its way up through the lofty village of Saint Paul De Vence, nestled in the Alpine foothills rising up from the Mediterranean, the air spiced with the scents of Provence: thyme, pine and ancient olive trees. Gates and Baker received the usual warm reception from Baldwin, known locally for his generosity and his legendary parties, which, over the years, had hosted everybody from Miles Davis to Maya Angelou and Harry Belafonte.

The three dined together under the setting sun, with Baker and Baldwin gossiping about other celebrities, playing one-upmanship with their own stories and remembering their long, glorious lives, even as the community they had fought on behalf of was attempting to forget them, forcing both into something of a self-imposed exile in Eden. We remember Baldwin and Baker as legendary figures, but at this time in the 1970s, both of them were seriously out of fashion. Baldwin's nuanced, human stories couldn't easily be used for racial or political propaganda, and his sexuality came under the focus of a Black Power movement hinged on the heteronormative masculine, as a counter-balance to the soft old "Uncle Tom" depiction at the turn of the twentieth century. Likewise, the irony of the "savage" in Baker's performances was lost on a Black political movement priding itself as sophisticated, international and urban.

Hurt by their homeland, Gates observed two older legends veering from nostalgia to bitterness and back again, recalling their reasons for leaving the United States and the difficulties of

losing touch with friends and family, but also the pleasures of beginning again, in a new home, with new possibilities. For the Black nomad, travelling is always plural. There is the physical and the figurative, the external and the internal, or what that other great Black traveller W.E.B. Dubois described as "double consciousness": the true self and the self as observed and imposed by the White gaze, with all its stereotypes. Baldwin and Baker weren't just transatlantic commuters; they carried communities on their shoulders, in their metaphorical backpacks, and walked in the name of those who couldn't. They also had to subvert the gaze of those they often moved amongst, transcend racial stereotypes, and insist freedom into being against a backdrop of oppression.

On that blissful evening in Provence, then, Baker and Baldwin weren't connecting merely as successful celebrities revelling in the Riviera, but rather by the beautiful struggle inextricably linked to their lives as Black people who had moved constantly through the treacherous twentieth century, by their *journeys* as Black people across time and space. And it is this notion of a multifaceted experience specific to the Black traveller that became the catalyst for "Looking B(l)ack", a symposium exploring the myriad ways that members of the Black community experience the world through travelling. We were inspired by the conviviality and international politics of the movements that gave birth to people such as Baldwin and Baker, from the Harlem Renaissance and the Negritude Movement, to post-war African Independence movements, and explored these themes through the intersection of art, photography, historical narratives, poetry performance, live music, and panel discussions.

In order to achieve the correct environment, we drew from a concept Gates mentions during his sojourn to James Baldwin's provincial spread, the notion of the "welcome table". This was from the last novel Baldwin was working on before his death, which he never managed to finish, based upon the powerful Black thinkers, artists and musicians who had visited the writer's home over the years. We had to create an informal and convivial space, where artists and audience members were encouraged to mingle in an egalitarian environment and bring something of themselves to the welcome table: a dance, a vocal response to a performance, a business card – anything. I brought along a book I'd recently acquired, my first edition copy of George Padmore's *Pan-Africanism or Communism*, as a conversation starter, for people to touch, read and discuss. At the back of the space we created a casual environment filled with powerful semiotics from the African diaspora, drawing from BOZAR's wonderful archive of *Drum Magazine* covers, to fuel the atmosphere and offer a place where those presenting work could meet with those in the audience offering their time to engage with the work. This is part of the Black vernacular tradition that stresses the important engagement between performers and audience. The speakers were esteemed, but the academics, artists and thinkers who attended as observers were equally as impressive, and this relationship between performers and audience produced its own kind of knowledge and intelligence.

Caryl Phillips was one of the visitors to James Baldwin's "welcome table" on numerous occasions throughout the 1980s, and he delivered a keynote speech about a visit to Venice, in which he imagines a meeting with the footballer Mario Balotelli as a child living in the ghetto. This raised the dual questions of forced travel for Black communities due to economic factors, but also of those who may be unlikely or unable to travel, and the event was haunted by people who could not attend our metaphorical "welcome table". I made clear in my opening address that the position of those in attendance was one of privilege: they were part of the 20% of the world that understands English and the 40% who have the Internet, on which they likely booked their ticket. I needed a passport to travel to Belgium and check into my hotel, and a European passport means that I can travel around the world without much hassle.

While we had people in attendance, such as Suleiman Addonia, who had survived the worst kind of displacement and is now able to enlighten people in spaces such as BOZAR, it was important to draw attention to the people who were noticeable by their absence. In Marseille, for instance, I met a young Sudanese poet by the name of Issa. I had hoped that he would be able to take part in the symposium, but he couldn't because of his restrictive status as an asylum seeker.

This is not a patronising plea for us to remember "those less fortunate than ourselves". In the Atlas Mountains, near the entrance to the Sahara desert, I once met a Berber man close to what some of us in the West might call poverty, yet who found the West's ideas of itself amusing. "They have so much, and yet so little", he told me. "They come here and think they can buy anything. But in the desert it is not only money that buys, but a warm heart." What we were trying to do, though, was to give a reminder that if the notion of Black travel must do anything, it must find a way to connect and build bridges across the various experiences of Blackness. Good work can be achieved both inside and outside official institutions, but the practitioners operating in each circle must never forget each other.

It was a visit to the so-called "Jungle" in Calais in 2016 that encouraged me to approach the notion of Black travel this way. Over some fragrant, milky Arabic tea, Hishem, a young man from Sudan who ran one of many small, remarkably organised cafes and had been living in the Jungle for ten months, told me how he'd lost everything. He had no surviving family members left, and only painful memories of the past and tremulous visions of the future, stuck in this limbo land between Africa and Europe, between home (a little of which he'd miraculously fashioned in his cushion-covered cafe) and anonymity. As I left his creaking plywood premises, he suggested that I write about his story and of life in the Jungle, a request I was nervous about. This man was intelligent, articulate and literate, so wouldn't it be better that he write about the Jungle himself? Maybe I could help attract attention to his writing, or publish his story on the website that I ran, but what did I personally know about seeing friends massacred, fleeing war, hiding for my life in shipping containers or ill-equipped boats to arrive penniless at a bunch of cold, wind-swept shacks in the hinterlands of northern France, aside from what he was telling me?

After exchanging details, I left the Jungle on my bicycle and slowly realised that I was being watched and followed through the blustery streets of Calais by the French police. Attempting to enter the white gates of the port to catch my ferry back to the UK, I was stopped before I could even get to passport control, searched, asked for my ID, where I was going, where I'd come from, how long I'd been away, and why. Finally, after more questioning and looks of suspicion, I was allowed to enter an official compound I'd seen other brown-skinned men of my age looking at with longing from a distance. I was in; they were out.

I was "in" because I had ID. I had ID because I was born and raised in England, had a history connected to Europe, knew how things ran. And yet within this piece of geography, this idea of Europe, I was frequently reminded that I wasn't all the way in; one Remembrance Day – a day I've come to dread for the way it spikes ugly nationalism on which I sometimes find myself on the receiving end – I was hit with that old

chestnut and told to "go back to where you came from" by a middle-aged man, red-faced with rage and racism. My skin colour had disguised various facts, such as my grandfather having fought for Britain behind enemy lines in The Second World War and winning a war medal. My skin had disguised my Europeanness, and European was still being used as a synonym for White.

As I thought about Black travel, I thought of the story of my grandmother, who picked cotton in the segregated South and fled to New York penniless as a teenager, but never once set foot outside of America. The great travel writer, Pico Iyer, wrote beautifully in his seminal text "Why We Travel" that "we travel first to lose ourselves, we travel next to find ourselves". But it was the poet Warsan Shire who wrote, "you only leave home if home is the mouth of a shark". Some of the more radical speakers that I wanted to be involved didn't necessarily feel comfortable in the space in which we held our event, and there are 'some committees who don't want their travels to be documented. For others, it would have been dangerous to share their travel experiences. As well as a place of celebration and networking, it was important to remember that the way we approached the notion of Black travel, and where we decided to stage the event, were contentious issues.

But we return again to the Harlem Renaissance, which was well known for its high-profile disagreements between public intellectuals. As long as these disagreements can co-exist in a productive way, they can fuel debate and improve standards, giving a political hue to the sometimes-naive pursuit of beauty, or serving as a creative tonic for political bitterness, ultimately producing balance and excellence. As Joyce Moore Turner recounts in her book about the Harlem Renaissance: "Serious as they were, they had the ability to kid each other and laugh at themselves. There were marked differences noted as well: Huiswoud the quiet thinker who shunned

the limelight, Hermie the efficient collaborator and facilitator who got things done, Moore the bibliophile and extemporaneous 'orator of electrifying passion and clarity', Domingo the astute businessman and caustic and effective writer and speaker, Briggs the clever writer who used the absurd to shock and call attention to the ridiculous position of the opponent. Their names were frequently linked – a testament to the fact that they could work together and maintain their comradeship despite the contentious atmosphere within many organisations".

The Harlem Renaissance was a social scene, with frequent lunches, debates, dinners and soirées, in the company of luminaries such as Langston Hughes and Claude McKay, Richard B. Moore and many others. Within this group of friends you had former residents of places such as Suriname, Jamaica, Missouri, Saint Croix and Barbados, with mother tongues of American English, British English, Patois, Creole, Dutch and Danish. The Harlem Renaissance, then, was fuelled by movement and multicultural collaboration, which in turn made it the nexus of formally displaced and subjugated peoples. Harlem became a city of the African diaspora, built on the foundations of African Americans who'd travelled north, and men and women from all over the Caribbean bringing various languages, cultures, educations, tales of resistance, folk stories, and ideas that had survived European colonialism with them. This connected to the socialist mood being spread in Europe at a time when the Russian revolution appeared to herald a new world order that might power up Black communities fighting against Western Imperialism.

Travelling, at its best, involves a certain amount of struggle, and struggle is where we often forge our strongest friendships (or realise when a friendship is over). This is because, as humans, we connect not through purely happy

times, but through much deeper experiences. My best friends are my best friends because they've seen me at my worst and at my most unguarded, and have accepted me for who I am. And this is something we can find when we travel. We can be ourselves and move on if it doesn't work out. Travelling is a wonderful way to share an intimate and ephemeral space. A long train journey, a difficult flight, a surprising situation. People we meet on these journeys stay with us forever, precisely because they've shared a certain discomfort with us.

You get to know someone when you're travelling, even if you'd "known" them before. Many of us who travelled as young people with a group of friends have that experience of having a big fall-out with someone and living through the end of a friendship with that person, or that lover, as soon as we return home. In a loving critique of Caryl Phillips's book *Atlantic Sound*, editor-at-large for *The Guardian*, Gary Younge, imagines he'd be frustrated being Caryl's travelling companion:

> "He avoids verbal contact with strangers,
> frets about air conditioning
> and bans music from the car for fear that it
> will distract his driver...
> A fortnight of such fastidiousness in foreign
> parts would drive you insane.
> You imagine a sweaty standoff in a sun-
> baked street: Phillips pleading
> for a return to the hotel for a poolside nap,
> you screaming: "If I'd known
> you were going to be like this we would have
> gone to Tenerife."

I've been lucky, in that travelling has been a mostly rewarding experience allowing me to network without networking. Not in that cynical way, where you go to parties and try to win friends through false flattery, but by learning about people in a space where you may as well talk because there's nothing else to do, where

you may as well be yourself and engage in deep conversations, because your time away from home is too short for small talk.

I think of the people who attended this symposium and I met them all through travelling. I first became friends with Roger Robinson, for instance, during our time together in a maximum-security prison in California, delivering a poetry workshop for young men serving life sentences, a moment that had a profound effect on us. I may not see Roger for years – but through that two hours in Folsom Prison, a bond will always be there. I met Bernardine Evaristo for the first time in Charleston, South Carolina. I'd just finished a documentary about my grandmother's role in the great migration, fleeing a life of cotton-picking in the American South at the age of fourteen, in 1930, in order to make a better life in New York. And there in Charleston, the first words Bernardine said to me were: "I listened to your documentary. It was good!" Words that a writer at the beginning of their career needs to hear from a more established writer. I first met Claude Grunitzky – who coined the term "transculturalism" and established the ground-breaking *Trace* magazine – when I recognised him on a Eurostar heading for Paris. He'd ignored emails that I'd sent over the years, but meeting him in that situation left an impression on both of us.

I met Caryl Phillips, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Maggi Morehouse, and Sharmilla Beezmohun for the first time in Belgium, at the University of Liège, on a day that changed my life. Caryl became my mentor, and Sharmilla, who was responsible for bringing all the British writers over to the symposium, has done more for my literary career than anyone. She introduced me to my agent Suresh, who introduced me to my editor, Cecilia Stein, at Penguin Books, and connected me to the Afro-European network of

academics who've endlessly enriched my work. As a working-class Black kid born into Margaret Thatcher's Britain, in the hinterlands of Sheffield – my literary career has literally been sustained by a network of Black travellers. Travel allows us to be ourselves, but it also offers us an opportunity to reinvent ourselves – when you go away for a long time, you never come all the way home, you leave a part of yourself out there and usually return a different person. As Ibn Battuta, the famous Muslim traveller, once wrote: "travel gives you a home in a thousand strange places, and makes you a stranger in your own land". But our symposium was also a reminder that travel can mean many different things. Suleiman Addonia had been a refugee since he was two, moving from one country to another. Since exile now came with a restriction of movement, travel was, in a large part of his life, something he did mentally. He found solace in books, as well as paintings, that were "the gateway to places, people and cultures" different to his own.

Travel also enabled Tete Michel Kpomassie, author of the classic *An African in Greenland*, to bridge the gap between African and Inuit cultures. His observation of the effects of Danish colonialism on Greenland allowed him to understand the French colonialism of his native Togo with new eyes.

For Lola Akimade Akerstrom, a Swedish Nigerian, National Geographic explorer, travel means listening. Listening to a place – wherever it may be – and trying to understand it as best as she can, respecting it in a way that personally links her to it. "Travel is about being an open-minded sponge, to not only soak up other cultures with respect, but to also squeeze some of myself and my culture out in return to foster understanding, to break down bias, and break through prejudices."

Kevi Donat, who leads Black heritage tours through Paris, says: "In my mind travel represents more than just a journey. It is about adventures, getting out of one's comfort zone. Confronting assumptions to a reality full of complexities: the unknown!"

And finally, for Sibo Kanobana, who chaired our panel about Black travel, travel was "a source of anguish and joy. The anguish to be labelled suspicious by official representatives of nation-states, but also the joy to be free of nation, language, culture or ethnicity. The joy to just be myself".

And that was the virtue of a symposium dedicated to Black travel; creating a convivial space where Blackness wasn't imposed by an external gaze, but rather lived through the human experience. A space to be one's self.

Podcast from the Looking B(l)ack Symposium: https://soundcloud.com/petermeanwell/the-afropean-podcast-pilot/s-9xKr0

Darkness in the Soul

KRZYSZTOF GUTFRANSKI

"Then, at midnight I entered Poland. It was dark – dark not only in the smoke, but in the soul of its people, who whispered in the night as we rode slowly through the murk of the railway yards".

[W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto", *Jewish Currents*, May 1952]

In the nineteenth-century, Poland – a country that was to gradually disappear, temporarily, from the map of Europe – was back then punching above its weight in terms of solidarity with other peoples around the globe not favoured by history, to the point of the Poles earning themselves the compliment of being seen as "honorary Negroes" by the president of Haiti.[1]

Today, at a time when Poland is again thriving as a nation state, it is sometimes less astute in its intercultural affinity. The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs recently committed a major gaffe by referring to a non-existent Latin American country – "San Escobar". This incident caused much amusement and went viral on Twitter, with humorous responses that largely drew on stereotypes about Latin America, thus demonstrating the low intercultural awareness in Poland.

Nevertheless, in modern-day Poland – an ethnically monocultural country – "otherness" is not a matter of skin colour or colonial tradition, but rather one of class division, ever more pronounced after the post-capitalist transformation. Even following Poland's accession to the EU in 2004, and despite Poland's full access to online information, Polishness continues to be defined by three factors: knowledge of the language, the Catholic faith, and ethnicity. This approach is favoured by Poland's current government, with its two-faced immigration strategy.[2] Poland is promoted as a "bulwark of Christianity", but migrants from Syria or African countries are not welcome, despite the fact that of all the member states of the EU, it is Poland that has admitted the largest number of economic migrants.[3] These new arrivals include not only the culturally close Ukrainians, but also Filipinos and Indians.[4] Poland has never seriously succumbed to racism, perhaps due to a lack of opportunity. It has never had exotic colonies, and, after the fall of communism in 1989, the diminution in the number of technological, scientific and cultural exchanges with the "Global South" was not conducive to creating a coherent stereotype of a foreigner, let alone one based on skin colour – despite the fact that the number of foreigners has steadily increased over the last 30 years. In this monocultural society, largely based on agriculture, the fight for equitable redistribution has played itself out in negotiating the role and privileges of the urban intelligentsia, the Catholic Church, and international corporations. Since 2010, the internal class conflict in Poland has been subsumed by Polish political divisions, embodied in the symbolic discord over the Smoleńsk air crash. In Poland, divisions into "us" and "them" do not follow predictable criteria such as ethnicity.

With the African diaspora in mind – as well as the concept of "dis-othering" as proposed by

Antonia Alampi and Bonaventure Ndikung – Warsaw and all the cities of Poland differ in their post-war, monocultural make-up from the other partner cities taking part in the project. This creates a lack of understanding of other cultures and a vulnerability to the media manipulation thereof. Thus, paradoxically, Polish society – one of the least racist of all those engaged in the project – is now in danger, due to this lack of exposure, of being manipulated by the policies of fear and Islamophobia whipped up by the current government. In the 2019 election campaign, the migration issue was superseded by the supposed threat posed by the LGBTQ community – just like that supposedly posed by "multikulti" – another issue presented as "aping the West" and thus a form of cultural colonisation. The populist governments in the region call for the regaining of cultural, political, and regional sovereignty, as well as "ethnic homogeneity". Will this really prove a vote winner?

This "anti-multikulti" stance does not fall on particularly fertile ground in Poland, where EU funds, freedom to travel, and being part of the "Western club" are highly valued. Poles are therefore more invested in European projects than are Germans – not to mention the British. Polish enthusiasm for democracy – approved by 66% of the population in a 2019 study by the Pew Research Center – is higher than the European average of only 39%. Popular support for the ruling right-wing party stems not so much from any enthusiasm for "national socialism", as from the economic incentives provided by the government.[5]

Poles are open towards other cultures – having experienced mass exposure to it in the many European cities in which they have found themselves as economic migrants – unlike their backward government, whose attitude to people of colour can be jocularly described as "bambomental" – a term proposed by the artist

Mamadou Diouf, who has promoted African culture in Warsaw. In Poland, many classical works of Polish children's literature, still on the school curriculum, reflect the patronisation and infantilisation of Africans. The limited image of Africa that Poles have does not reflect their cultural or economic aspirations, so they are sceptical about seeing Africa as the continent where a future or civilisational model is to be sought.

In communist Poland, there was a trend to be open to the Global South, launched with the World Festival of Youth in Warsaw in 1955 and later followed by the admission of African students to Polish higher education, and an enthusiasm for Latin American literature. Nevertheless, during the communist era, Poles did not travel much to the West, and it was only EU accession that changed that. More recently, the World Congress of Catholic Youth in Krakow in 2016 saw numerous visitors from other continents received enthusiastically in the country. And let's also mention the fascinating case of the exorcist priest, John Bashobora from Uganda, who became a household name in Poland, wowing crowds and the media with his mass rituals. On that occasion, religion removed the cultural barriers between Poland and Africa in a uniquely Polish phenomenon.[6]

Africans represent less than 1% of the Polish population of 38 million. Today, Poles are most favourably disposed towards Western Europeans, and least favourably disposed towards Roma and inhabitants of the Middle East, with Africans and Asians somewhere in-between. According to recent polls, two out of three Poles are happy for an African to settle in Poland, with 50% ready to accept him as a friend, family doctor, or teacher; 30% would acquiesce in their child marrying an African.[7]

In 1949, the Pan-Africanist activist W.E.B. Du Bois visited the ruined Warsaw and wrote

his article The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto (1952),[8] in which he redefined the "colour-line", taking into account the Jewish question, in which racial discrimination was not based on any radical difference in appearance between the oppressor and the oppressed. In the next issue of Obieg, we draw on Du Bois' gesture that redefined Pan-Africanism, as we return to the African diaspora to explore how the project Dis-Othering shows the perception of Africa in Warsaw, represented there by a community of activists, NGOs and artists, who clearly articulate their culture. Dis-Othering has been born out of opposition to the creation of otherness and driven by the opposite motivation: a curiosity about, and a desire to explore, other cultures. Our first issue, Dakar: Art Afropolis (summer 2016), was only possible thanks to the kind collaboration of Koyo Kouoh, Fatou Kandé Senghor, Joanna Grabski, and all the contributors and supporters of Obieg. Our next issue will close the circle. We have invited contributors from the African diaspora to take part, along with others who have worked closely with the community, such as artists, sociologists and researchers. As part of the project Dis-Othering, two research residencies were put in place, and we will also be publishing their findings. In September, we hosted Joanna Grabski from Arizona State University, and Johny Pitts from afropean.com, in London. Pitts explored W.E.B. Du Bois' journey to the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1949 and its impact on African-American intellectuals. Grabski researched the specificity of place in Warsaw to explore contemporary artistic projects in relation to diaspora, mobility, nationalism, and art-world globalisation. This next issue will also feature texts by Maja Ngom, Dúnia Pacheco, Aleksandra Winiarska, Jakub Barua, Mamadou Diouf, Przemysław Strożek, and Paweł Średziński.

Today, at a time when borders are closing rather than opening, when we have become preoccupied with safety, and the language of art has become standardised, we are all the more keen to explore the themes that are part of the discourse, bringing into the reflection in Poland on contemporary art the kind of phenomena that have until now had only limited exposure. We turn our attention to other regions of the globe to give exposure to different cultural viewpoints outside the Euro-Atlantic core. In Poland, the geographic heart of the European continent, we are in a singular position to do so.[9] The Dis-Othering issue of Obieg is available in December 2019: https://obieg.u-jazdowski.pl/en/strona-glowna

Translated by Anda MacBride (Obieg)

NOTES

1 "The White Negroes of Europe" is the phrase that was used by the first ruler of independent Haiti, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, to describe the Polish people in recognition of their support for his country's independence revolution in 1804.

2 Makana Eyre & Martin Goillandeau, "Poland's Two-Faced Immigration Strategy", *Politico* [online], 6 June 2019, https://www.politico.eu/article/poland-two-faced-immigration-strategy-ukraine-migrants/ [accessed: 6 December 2019].

3 "Polish Support for EU Booming Despite Clashes with Brussels", *Euronews* [online], 16 May 2019. https://www.euronews.com/2019/05/16/polish-support-for-eu-booming-despite-clashes-with-brussels [accessed: 6 December 2019].

4 Daniel Tilles, "In 2018 Poland Issued More Residence Permits to Non-EU immigrants than any other member state – again", *Notes from Poland* [online], 27 October 2019, https://notesfrompoland.com/2019/10/27/in-2018-poland-issued-more-residence-permits-to-non-eu-immigrants-than-any-other-member-state-again/ [accessed: 6 December 2019].

5 Przemysław Sadura & Sławomir Sierakowski, "The Political Cynicism of Poles, a Sociological Research Report", *Krytyka* [online] (17 September 2019): https://krytykapolityczna.pl/kraj/polityczny-cynizm-polakow-raport-z-badan-socjologicznych/ [in Polish; accessed: 6 December 2019].

6 Paweł Średziński, *Afryka i jej mieszkańcy w polskich mediach, Jak mówić i pisać o Afryce?* Warsaw: 2011, pp. 21–22.

7 Africans in Poland, Research into Combating Discrimination. Report on, and Analysis of, the Statistical Data for the "Afryka Inaczej" Foundation, Warsaw 2015. http://afryka.org/download/raport2015/prezentacja.pdf [accessed: 6 December 2019].

8 W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto", *Jewish Life* (now *Jewish Currents*), May 1952, pp. 14–15.

9 See our statement: https://obieg.u-jazdowski.pl/en/wizja

In Residence in the World –
Multiple Transmissions: Art in the Afropolitan Age

SANDRINE COLARD

The blockbuster exhibition *Africa Remix: The Contemporary Art of A Continent* toured three continents in the period from 2004 to 2007. Curated by the French-based Cameroonian, Simon Njami, the show travelled from Paris to Düsseldorf, London, Tokyo, Stockholm, and Johannesburg. Along with its interactivity – it was accompanied by four different websites and a CD-ROM – the global itinerancy of the show was itself a declaration of cosmopolitanism and the "twenty-first century-ness" of contemporary African arts. No less than four versions of the catalogue were produced by the different venues hosting the show.[1] The one produced by the Johannesburg Art Gallery was augmented by the English translation of an important text whose central idea has since gained incredible currency. Entitled "Afropolitanism",[2] this essay by the influential thinker Achille Mbembe conceptualised what he has described as the transnational cultures of twenty-first century African-identified urbanites. Both on and off the continent, Mbembe described the Afropolitan experience as one that has its origins in the perpetual movements that have historically characterised African populations – from labour migrations and slavery, to post-colonial diasporas and exiles – as well as in foreigners' convergence towards the continent – whether in the form of colonial conquests, economic migrations, or whatever else besides. Against the currents of nativism that had

prevailed since African independences, Mbembe opposed these itinerancies – physical, mental and online – as the common denominator of proliferating African urban subjects. From the seamless interlacing of these forms of nomadism was born a new "aesthetic and poetics of the world". The artists of *Africa Remix* reflected the Afropolitan idea in their "awareness of the interweaving of the here and there, the presence of the elsewhere in the here and vice versa", in their domestication of "the unfamiliar", their "work with what seems to be opposites".[3] Nowadays, the global metropolises of the world – Paris or New York, Dakar or Lagos, London or Houston – are bursting with African and African-descendant individuals whose identities and mental geographies are radically plural.

However, Afropolitanism has also become a highly contested idea. In the wake of its 2005 coinage in an article by the writer Taiye Selasi,[4] the term was quickly recuperated as a rallying brand for the hip, urban life of an often diasporic, highly educated middle-class, and the dominance of fashion and lifestyle has led to the concept being accused of commodity fetishism, elitism, and class bias. Regular disavowals of the idea are professed in print and online, backed by well-known intellectuals such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Anti-manifestos explaining "Why I am Not An Afropolitan"[5] battle with proponents of this self-proclaimed identity. In the media arena, the global popularity and privileging of elements of pop culture, consumerism, and neo-liberal luxury, has tended to eclipse the more

theoretically layered Afropolitanism of Mbembe and others.[6]

Nevertheless, I argue that the critical edge of Mbembe's theory is reactivated when one is attentive to the profound ambivalence of the migrations that underlies the Afropolitan experience, once the one-dimensional discourse celebrating a privileged minority that is circulated in media and popular culture becomes more attuned to the realities of the majority of African mobilities. In their most recent and dramatic form, the African migrations that have been part of the so-called European refugee crisis since 2014 have claimed the lives of thousands in the Mediterranean Sea. But even in less tragic circumstances, the travels of Africans – both within and beyond their own continent – are far from being unhindered. In a provocative article published in the well-known online magazine *Africa is a Country*, author Vik Sohonie asserts that "citizenship is the most powerful currency today, often superseding race".[7] Being the bearer of an African passport often means the end of many, if not all, travelling aspirations, and as Mbembe himself nuances, "to be African is to be conscious of a segmented planet of multiple speeds".[8] Taking just the example of the United Kingdom, Sohonie reveals that "citizens of African countries have nearly 50 percent of all visa applications denied".[9] All of us with African relatives have witnessed cases of family members who are dispersed around the world and prevented from seeing each other for years, or unable to pursue an education abroad – even when accepted to the most respected institutions – for the lack of visa authorisations. Unambiguously, the article concludes that "the privileges and restrictions of nationality loom as the apartheid of the 21st century".[10] In these conditions, Mbembe's recognition of an "aesthetic and poetics of the world" which in spite of it all, *still* weaves the "here and there, the presence of the elsewhere in the here and vice versa", regains its

critical power and resilient tones.

In 2019, I was invited by WIELS, a leading contemporary art institution in Brussels, Belgium, to curate an exhibition based on the group of African artists who had completed residencies within their walls since 2015. Now an integral component of the art-world landscape, residencies put artists in motion around the globe, while simultaneously immersing them in one place for a definite period of time. Artists, and African artists in particular, have become successive locals of multiple places and cities: they have become, de facto, "Afropolitan" artists. If this cosmopolitanism is true for a majority of the world's artists, it is particularly true for African artists, as the ecology of the art world and residencies is still dominated by the West. All eight of the artists gathered in the WIELS exhibition live or maintain a strong physical or mental anchorage in Africa, but like many of today's African artists, they are regularly in residence away from home. Five of them – the Congolese artists Jean Katambayi, Sinzo Aanza, Georges Senga, Nelson Makengo, and the South African, Simnikiwe Buhlungu – had been resident artists in WIELS (and elsewhere). The works exhibited by the three additional artists – the Nigerian Emeka Ogboh, the Botswana-born Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum, and the Senegalese-born Pélagie Gbaguidi – had been created in a variety of locations including Austin, Lagos, Berlin, Toronto, Brussels, and Umbria, Italy.

At the same time, struck by the concomitance of WIELS creating this residency programme for African artists and the beginning of the refugee crisis and its deadly management by European governments, I could not help but contemplate the paradox of being an artistic "resident" when so many Africans are denied access to Europe, and when almost none of these artists could claim that their mobility is a given. Despite the featured artists' already

well-established reputations, some had to postpone their residency because their visas had not arrived, while others had to shorten their residency because a renewal was rejected, and some were not able to attend the opening because of the discouragement or complications caused by having to go through that whole process all over again. Yet in spite of this, all their works reflected a profound entanglement with the world, a way of being in conversation with the world that confronted, but also trumped the physical limitations imposed upon their creators. In the face of this situation, the criticism of Afropolitanism as a form of elitism forged by cultural brokers and artists said to have evolved in allegedly privileged circles is revealed as inadequate. It has rather remained a trenchant concept, one which designates a cosmopolitanism that is specific to contemporary Africans, and one that is mostly reached through another, particular road, riddled with obstacles overcome.

Entitled *Multiple Transmissions: Art in the Afropolitan Age,* the WIELS exhibition (25 May–18 August 2019) opened during the symposium Race, Power & Culture at BOZAR. It reflected upon the complexities of this African cosmopolitanism. It invited the audience to look at contemporary African artists' transversal legacies, and at the global resonances of sounds, images, energies and ideas at work in their practices, spilling over erected borders. As a whole, the exhibition's photographs, videos, installations and paintings spoke of connections between cities, of networks of ideas, and renewed subjects for portraiture, of the transmission of sounds, energies and histories. Imbued with the physical and mental movements that characterise our time, these artworks nourish radically plural connections.

The work of the Congolese photographer Georges Senga epitomises this era of multidirectional exchanges. The two photographic series presented, "Cinéma"

and "Vendeurs de rue" (figs. 1 & 2), present an archaeology and a contemporary view of how cinema and the circulation of international films have informed the society of Lubumbashi. In his series of cinemas, "Cinéma" (2018) Senga's photographs document the obsolescence of the colonial cinematic apparatus: rusty reel boxes of "educational" films, deserted and silent theatre rooms, yellowed membership booklets, and dusty projectors. By contrast, the series "Vendeurs de rue" (2018) shows how today's informal economy of pirated DVDs is able to thrive, with moving images ricocheting from all over the world, the result of the country's opening of borders in the 1990s at the end of Mobutu's Regime and citizens' desire for mobility. Buses were purchased in neighbouring Tanzania and renamed "Dubaï", from where they were originally imported. To bypass extravagant fees, Congolese custom officers were remunerated with pirated DVDs. Copies of Hollywood action movies and Nollywood dramas, Bollywood romances and Japanese Manga, among others, became currency with which to access transportation and actual border crossing. In his series, Senga acknowledges the transition from a hierarchy of images to a global democracy of images; from a time when "members only" accessed modernity, to a global proliferation of limitless reproductions.

The project *Nuit Debout* (2019) by the Congolese artist Nelson Makengo was born from the artist's contrasting experience of night as spaces of resistance in Paris and Kinshasa. As a student In the "city of light", Makengo encountered the Nuit Debout protest movement and was struck by the freedom of speech, when, as he says, "the voiceless could finally be heard". The artist recognised resilience in the perpetually awake Kinois, in their fearless struggle against the city's darkness – both in its lack of light and in its growing criminality – and

in the round-the-clock city noise. Inspired as much by the avantgarde cinema of Dziga Vertov (1896–1954) and Sergueï Eisenstein (1898–1948) as by contemporary Congolese writers like Fiston Mwanza (b. 1981), Makengo's film is a statement against the idea of the Congo as the proverbial "heart of darkness", and a hommage to the city's inhabitants who continuously reinvent light — in spite of the well-known délestage (power cut) — through their daily débrouillardise (making do). In the artist's words, some 15 million Kinois "self-illuminate themselves" and their way to hope and beauty. Makengo's installation recreates the night sellers' booths dispensing so many strategies of enlightenment and communication (fig. 3). His photomontage - a chromatic scale of lights that intersperse a dangerous, but exciting darkness – is a mosaic capturing "the precariousness and social chaos" reigning in Kinshasa.

The videos by the young South African artist Simnikiwe Buhlungu are interrogations – both in form and content – that question dominant modes of knowledge production and their circulation. By staging playful speech acts and dialogues, she disrupts canonical historical and scientific narratives, with re-signified words, annotated sentences, irreverent performances and audio-visual montages. Buhlungu captures sounds and words – both uttered and written – that are echoed between Africa and its diaspora. Known as "stereomodernism", the idea is that Black diasporic music and cinema – particularly African American – have been central in creating a transnational sentiment of belonging and solidarity with Africa. In the video *Vitamin See* (2017), a children's discussion about the unexplored vastness of the ocean, or a footage of the African-American guitar player Sister Rosetta Tharpe, resonates with the history of the transatlantic trade of un-commemorated slaves across the "Black Atlantic". In the video *Rolling a Joint* (2015) Buhlungu rolls pages from Spike Lee's

film script into a joint ready to be smoked, for Lee's words to be inhaled.

Pertinences Citoyennes (2018) is an ensemble of photographs, installation and film produced by the Congolese artist, Sinzo Aanza (fig. 4). The artist examines how notions of citizenship, nation-state and sovereignty are rendered void by the hard capitalism operating in the Congo, which, ever since the colonial "scramble for Africa", has been constructed as an international financial playground out of the hands of its population. Aanza describes Congo as an "institutional national fiction", in which the exercise of power is but a role play represented by certain objects of traditional and violent power. Developed by exiled Congolese, the practice of "mutakalisation" seeks to condemn the country's political figures by humiliating and beating them up. Integral to "mutakalisation" is the filmic capture of these humiliating beatings and their web broadcasting in order to ensure their worldwide visibility. Through the "feudality of capital", Aanza argues that the Congolese have been made citizens of the world against their best interest, and often forced into exile. Mutakalisation is born from this ambivalent cosmopolitanism, one that violently binds the Congolese diasporas to their native land's contested leaders.

In their distinctive ways, Pélagie Gbaguidi (Benin/Senegal) and Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum (Botswana/South Africa/Canada) both revisit traditions of portraiture (fig. 5). The two textiles by Gbaguidi, *Dé-fossilisation du regard. Dialogue avec la Madonna del Parto* (2018) are a reflection upon the figure of the Madonna, and in particular, her fifteenth-century representation in Piero Della Francesca's famous *Madonna del Parto*. The artist seeks to problematise the Madonna's status of feminine archetype in the collective Western imaginary and questions the role of the Christian faith and the Virgin's

156

function of expiation and solace in the history of Italian fascism and colonialism, and in Europe's tragic reception of migrants on its shores.

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum paints colourful portraits of enigmatic people, in timeless and undetermined locales, and in fantastical décors (fig. 6). Inspired by the aesthetics of nineteenth and twentieth-century African studio photography, as much as by the eighteenth-century notion of the sublime, Victorian fashion and Yoruba traditions, Sunstrum creates self-mythologised characters in coherent universes, in harmony with nature and the cosmos, as in the paintings *Husband, Landlords, Echelon,* and *Do Your Worst* (2018).
Artists Jean Katambayi and Emeka Ogboh explore light, sound and energies and their balancing flows. Started when the artist was stuck in a Nairobi transit waiting for his visa to come through, Katambayi's "Afrolampes" (fig. 7) are drawings of phantasmagorical light bulbs. Highly detailed and fragile, they show how networks can channel energy and help organisms to function, as a metaphor for the situation of his country. Because it has been neglected, he says, "the African lightbulb, the Afrolamp, suffers from black light" ["l'ampoule africaine, l'afrolampe souffre de lumière noire"]. Katambayi's sculptural installation *Trotation* (2011) is an electrical circuit that seeks to equilibrate the imbalance between the northern and southern hemispheres, in the same way that the gigantic *Voyant* (2018) is inspired by the robots regulating the traffic of the major Congolese cities.

Emekah Ogboh uses sound to draw mixed urban portraits. In *Conductors Oshodi* (2018), the bright yellow is a tribute to the ubiquitous Lagosian Danfo buses, and the piece broadcasts the sonic atmosphere of the hailing bus conductors, merging together through sound cities from around the globe. *Spirit and Matter* (2017–2018) is a stained-glass light box in the

157

shape of a triptych, taking as a starting point the photograph of the area beneath the bridge at Ojuelegba, a point of convergence and passage for the West African coast, and the former site of a shrine for the Yoruba deity, Eshu (fig. 8). Ogboh mixes the spiritual and religious Yoruba undertones with those of Christian Europe, resulting in a piece resembling stained-glass windows, evoking the physical, spiritual, and physical wandering in the world as opposed to the mental peregrinations that bring him back home to the Nigerian megalopolis.

Transmission has been an idea fundamental to our understanding of art's evolution. Especially when applied to African arts, ossifying notions of authenticity and unchanging traditions have long prevailed. Yet the emergence of African contemporary art scenes has continuously short-circuited the conventional art history narratives, to the point that Mbembe affirms, "in fact, what we call 'tradition' does not exist". The merit of Afropolitanism is to force us to reckon with the multiplicity of the transversal and global influences and legacies that inform African artists today. At a time when political regimes in Europe and in the United States demonstrate an alarming rise of xenophobia, when borders are closing everywhere and migrants are left to die on the shores of Europe, Afropolitanism offers a formidable example of the transcendence of geographies, nationalities, languages, and time zones.

NOTES

1 Steven Nelson, "Africa Remix Remix", *African Arts*, 41/3, Fall 2008, pp. 1–8.
2 Achille Mbembe, "Afropolitanism", in Simon Njami (ed.), *Africa Remix. Contemporary Art of A Continent* (Johannesburg: Johannesburg Art Gallery/Jacana), 2007, pp. 26–29.
3 Op. cit., p. 28.
4 Taiye Selasi, "Bye Bye Babar (Or, What is an Afropolitan?)", *The LIP Magazine #5*, 3 March 2005. http://thelip.robertsharp.co.uk/?p=76. Accessed on 17 March 2019.
5 See, for instance, Emma Dabiri, "Why I am (still) Not an Afropolitan", *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 28:1, pp. 104–108.
6 For a general view of how the concept of "Afropolitan" has evolved, see Sarah Balakrishnan, "The Afropolitan Idea: New Perspectives on Cosmopolitanism in African Studies", *History Compass*, Volume 15, February 2017.
7 Vik Sohonie, "The Most Powerful Currency Today", *Africa is a Country*, 12 December 2018. Accessed on 2 March 2019. https://africasacountry.com/2018/12/the-most-powerful-currency-today
8 Quoted from Achille Mbembe's contribution to the panel "Borders, Dialogue", at the conference "The Multiplication of Perspectives", Museum of Modern Art, New York, 27 April 2019.
9 Vik Sohonie, op. cit.
10 Ibid.
11 Tsitsi Ella Jaji, *Africa in Stereo: Modernism, Music, and Pan-African Solidarity* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Gatekeeper Interview questions & online individual survey for staff

This annex provides
- **The list of questions posed to institutional gate keepers during live interviews (qualitative data source)**
- **The Individual online survey forwarded online by gatekeepers to selected staff (quantitative date source), including all 41 questions and the terms & conditions.**

GATEKEEPER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

General
1. What does 'diversity' mean to your institution? Is there an explicit policy on this?
2. Are public subsidies conditional on the diversity of proposed programming, personnel, publics?

Personnel
3. Is there a diversity criteria in job hirings at your institution?
4. Where do you publish your vacancy notices for new staff?
5. Do you know how many languages are spoken by your institution staff?
6. Since when has this, diversity, (if at all) been relevant or an issue in your institution and/or city?
7. What other factors are important to you in hiring employees besides knowledge and qualification?
8. What type of limits are there in diversifying your institution (programme, audience, personnel)? Hiring issues? Linguistic boundaries?
9. What does it mean to make geography the subject matter rather than some other criteria (philosophical etc) for your programming, personnel?

Public
10. Do you know the makeup of your city's populations? The languages spoken?
11. Is your institution informed about such data, or connected to researchers on the topic?
12. Do you collect feedback from public attending your programmes? How? Why?
13. Are the demographics of your city reflected in your institution? And your programming?
14. At whom is your programming targeted?

15. Are there any limits in diversifying your institution (programme, audience, personnel)? Hiring issues? Linguistic boundaries?
16. Do you have exchange programmes or residency schemes?
17. Do you have links with international arts institutions? What is the criteria for such partnerships/collaborations, if any?

Programming
18. What is your approach to programming for the institution?
19. How would you assess your programming in terms of breadth and diversity?
20. Does the institution connect to and reflect the local and international (scene/demographic)in its programming?
21. What is the institutions communication objectives, how do you (or wish to) present yourself to the outside world?
22. How do you conduct outreach and whom are you target audiences for your programing?

INDIVIDUAL ONLINE SURVEY FOR STAFF

What?
This online survey contributes to a mapping diversity exercise organised as part of the two-year project 'DIS-OTHERING - beyond Afropolitan & other labels', a Creative Europe project on the deconstruction of 'othering' practices in European cultural institutions. The project is led by the Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels (BOZAR), in partnership with SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin (SAVVY), and Kulturen in Bewegung, Vienna (VIDC). For more information, visit the project website here.

Why?
Starting from the observation that diversity in the arts must be reflected in all three 'P's (publics, programmes, and personnel), this survey seeks to map the diversity in decision-making personnel of visual and performing arts institutions in the three partner countries - Austria, Belgium, and Germany. In the light of ongoing political discussions among others in Europe and because of the growing activism from an inter-sectional point of view, this research will focus on the diversity of race, religion and gender.

How?

The mapping diversity exercise addresses 45 large cultural institutions from the visual and performing arts sectors in the three biggest cities of each partner country. A first qualitative interview is conducted with a 'gatekeeper' of each participating institution to address broader approaches to diversity concepts and policies and to introduce the project. This 'Gatekeeper' subsequently facilitates the distribution of the online survey link within their institution. Individual institutional staff members exercising executive or managerial positions with curatorship, programming, staffing, finance and/ or communication responsibilities then receive this online survey.

Confidentiality and data protection

The anonymity conditions comply with the new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the European Council of 27 April 2016 (entered into force on 25 May 2018). This individual online survey is distributed through a secured Survey Monkey software link. The extracted data is unlinked anonymous data, personal data and responses on race and religion are codified for analytical purposes, yet are disconnected from the individual identity of the respondent.
Please click here to read the Terms and Conditions (detailed here after the 41 questions)

WELCOME TO THE DIS-OTHERING INDIVIDUAL ONLINE SURVEY.

1. **Do you agree with the Terms and Conditions?**
   Note: during the survey you can always go back to former questions to change your answer. Once you close the survey changes will not be possible. The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.
   Yes, I agree with the Terms and Conditions and I would like to proceed with this survey.
   No, I don't agree with the Terms and Conditions and I prefer not to fill in this form.

2. **Age**
   Under 18 years
   18-24 years old
   25-34 years old
   35-44 years old
   45-54 years old
   55-64 years old
   65 years or older
   Nationality 1
   Nationality 2
   Please add your current nationality, if it is not on the list

3. **Current nationality (pick one or two nationalities)**
   Nationality 1
   Nationality 2
   Please add your nationality at birth, if it is not on the list

4. **Nationality at birth (pick one or two nationalities)**

5. **In which city is your institution located?**
   Antwerp
   Brussels
   Liège
   the city of my institution is not on the list:

6. **Gender (several options possible)**
   Female
   Male
   Non-binary
   Transgender
   Cisgender
   Prefer not to say
   Other (please specify)

7. **Sexual Orientation**
   Bisexual
   Heterosexual
   Homosexual
   Prefer not to say
   Other (please specify)

8. **Religious orientation or belief (several options possible)**
   Muslim
   Jewish
   Christian
   Hindu
   Buddhist
   Bahai
   Atheist
   Agnost
   Prefer not to say
   My religion, belief or conviction is not on the list (please specify)
   Comments

9. **Do you have a migration background?**
   This means that you have or at least one of your parents has another first nationality than that of the country you live in.
   Yes
   No
   Prefer not to say
   Background 1
   Background 2
   If you have roots in a country which is not listed above, please ad it here.

10. **If yes, where do you have roots?**

11. **Do you belong to an ethnic minority which is not linked to recent (first or second generation) migration?**
    Yes
    No
    Prefer not to say
    If yes, please specify:

12. **What is the highest level of education you have completed?**
    High-school diploma
    Apprenticeship
    Internship
    Vocational training and other practical professional skills
    Bachelor
    Master
    PhD
    Prefer not to say
    If your qualification is not mentioned above, please specify

13. **Please give an indication of your gross net income (i.e. approximate net income e.g. salary or scholarships)**
    < 20.000 EUR per year
    20.000-40.000 EUR per year
    40.000-60.000 EUR per year
    > 60.000 EUR per year
    Prefer not to say
    Other (please specify)

14. **What is the status of your position in your institution?**
    Employee unlimited term
    Employee limited term
    Freelance Consultant
    Volunteer
    Intern
    Prefer not to say
    Other (please specify)

15. **How many people do you supervise approximately?**

16. **How much budget do you manage approximately?**

17. **What is the approximate ratio of internal employees to external staff (consultants, short term interim contracts) in the entire institution?**
    Low
    High
    I don't know
    pick a language
    Language 1
    Language 2
    Language 3
    The language is not on the list

18. **What languages are predominantly spoken in your institution?**
    Can you elaborate?

19. **How diverse is the team of decision making staff in your institution?**
    Not diverse at all
    A little diverse
    Very diverse
    Can you elaborate?

20. **How diverse is the staff in general?**
    Not diverse at all
    A little diverse
    Very diverse

21. **Is there an official diversity policy, programme or officer in your institution?**
    No
    I do not know
    Yes
    If yes, please specify

22. **Are there diversity criteria in job hirings at your institution?**
    Yes
    No
    I do not know
    If yes, please specify

23. **Are there other deliberate strategies of inclusion exercised in your institution?**
    Yes
    No
    I don't know
    If yes, please specify:
    Public/ Audience
    Programming/
    Curatorship
    Personnel
    Comment

24. **Do you think there should be diversity quotas/targets in your institution at the level of:**
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
    Public/ Audience
    Programmes/
    Curatorship
    Personnel

25. **How important is diversity to your institution in terms of Public/ Audience, Personnel and Programming/ Curatorship on a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 10 (extremely important):**
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
    Please specify the selection you made above:

26. **Indicate on a scale of 1 to 10 if the program(s) of your institution target diverse audiences (1=not at all and 10=to a large extent)**
    Public/ Audience
    Programmes/Curatorship
    Personnel
    Comments:

27. **Do you consider yourself to contribute to the diversity of the...**
    Please elaborate

28. **Are you affected by diversity policies in your institution, and if so, how?**
    Yes
    No
    I don't know
    Prefer not to say

29. Do you know how staff who belong to underrepresented groups experience their job at your institution?
No
Prefer not to say
Yes
If yes, you do know, please elaborate

30. Have you ever experienced any form of discrimination in your institution?
No
Prefer not to say
Yes
If yes, please specify what kind of discrimination.

31. Are public subsidies conditional on the diversity of proposed programming, personnel, public? Please elaborate on the areas and conditions.
I don't know
No, they aren't
Yes, they are
Prefer not to say
If they are, please elaborate
Comments:

32. What do you know about the diversity demographics of your city's population?
I know a lot about it, and I actively engage with this topic.
I know quite much about it, but I don't actively engage with it.
I know something about it.
I know little about it.
I have no idea of the demographics concerning ethnic diversity in my city.
If yes, on what domains (for instance personnel, programming, publics or any other domain)?
If no, please justify why not?

33. Do you consider your institution to be representative of your city's population?
If yes, please specify if this is informally (through staff) or formally (through research or public institutions).

34. Is your institution informed on such data on diversity in the population of your city, or connected to researchers on the topic?
Not at all
Only to a limited extent
Quite well informed, there are some connections
Very well informed and very much connected to researchers on the topic
If yes, please elaborate.

35. Does your institution develop programming in partnership with representatives of diverse communities in your city?
Not at all
Yes, but it's rare
Yes, often
If yes, why and how?

37. How accessible is your institution perceived by the public in terms of:
Personnel
Programme/Curatorship
Public/Audience
Please explain why

38. Would you find it useful to explore diversity in your institution with surveys such as these?
Yes
No
If Yes, please specify why

39. Would you be interested to share your opinion on this topic in an individual interview? This would mean you will no longer be anonymous to the interviewer, in the publication of the results your anonymity will however still be guaranteed.
Yes
No
If yes, please fill in your e-mail, so that we can contact you:

40. Do you have any further questions or remarks?

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

The individual online survey is distributed through a secured Survey Monkey software link. The questionnaire includes both closed and open questions. The extracted data from the survey are unlinked anonymised data, which implicates that personal data and responses from individual respondents to questions such as race and religion are codified for analytical purposes, yet are disconnected from the individual identity of the respondent. The anonymity conditions have been reviewed by the legal department of the Centre of Fine Arts (Brussels) (project leader and controller of the data) and assessed thoroughly to generally comply with the new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the European Council of 27 April 2016 (entered into force on 25 May 2018) and with the new Belgian law of 30 July 2018. The data of this survey will be processed by Survey Monkey and controlled by the Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels. Find more information on the general terms concerning the Controller and processor of your data:

I. General Terms concerning the Controller (BOZAR, Centre for Fine Arts)
The collected survey data
- will be accessible only to a scientific committee comprising a total of six researchers from the three partner countries, who will perform a qualitative analysis of interview material and quantitative results, as well as direct visualisations of the survey results;
- will be discussed and engaged in via public programs· will not be shared beyond this research with other research projects;
- will be erased after 2 years.
The digital visualisation of the survey results
- will preserve the anonymity of individuals and institutions. Only a final list of participating institutions will be mentioned;
- will be presented by country and city against demographic metrics in order to contextualise data;
- will be published on the project website and in a chapter of the final printed publication of the Dis-Othering project, contextualized by the project's scientific team.
Your rights
- You have the right to withdraw consent at any time during the survey. PLease contact us by sending an e-mail to dpo@bozar.be. The supervisory authority for a complaint concerning this survey is : Data Protection Authority, Rue de la Presse 35, 1000 Brussels.

II. General Terms concerning the Processor (Survey Monkey)
1. Information SurveyMonkey collects about you (respondents)
Contact Information (for example an email address).
   You might provide SurveyMonkey with your contact information, whether through use of its services, a form on its website, an interaction with its sales or customer support team, or a response to one of SurveyMonkey's own surveys.
Usage information.
   SurveyMonkey collects usage information about you whenever you interact with its websites and services. This includes which web pages you visit, what you click on, when you perform those actions, what language preference you have, and so on.
Device and Browser data.
   SurveyMonkey collects information from the device and application you use to access its services. Device data mainly means your IP address, operating system version, device type, system and performance information, and browser type. If you are on a mobile device SurveyMonkey also collects the UUID for that device.

Information from page tags.
   SurveyMonkey uses third party tracking services that employ cookies and page tags (also known as web beacons) to collect data about visitors to its websites. This data includes usage and user statistics. Emails sent by SurveyMonkey or by users through its services include page tags that allow the sender to collect information about who opened those emails and clicked on links in them. SurveyMonkey provides more information on cookies below and in its Cookies Policy.
Log Data.
   Like most websites today, SurveyMonkey's web servers keep log files that record data each time a device accesses those servers. The log files contain data about the nature of each access, including originating IP addresses, internet service providers, the files viewed on its site (e.g., HTML pages, graphics, etc.), operating system versions, device type and timestamps.
Referral information.
   If you arrive at a SurveyMonkey website from an external source (such as a link on another website or in an email), SurveyMonkey records information about the source that referred you to them.
Information from third parties and integration partners.
   SurveyMonkey collects your personal information or data from third parties if you give permission to those third parties to share your information with SurveyMonkey or where you have made that information publicly available online.

2. How SurveyMonkey uses the information it collects:
SurveyMonkey processes your personal information in the following categories of data for legitimate interests pursued by SurveyMonkey, which are described in detail in this privacy policy. SurveyMonkey has undertaken to ensure that it places clear limitations on each of these uses so that your privacy is respected and only the information necessary to achieve these legitimate aims is used. SurveyMonkey's primary goal is to improve upon and make sure its services and messaging are relevant for all its users, while also ensuring that personal information of all users is respected and protected.
- Cookies (to include page tags).
   SurveyMonkey collects information using cookies when you take a survey. These cookies are used to ensure that the full functionality of its survey service is operational, to ensure the survey operates appropriately and optimally. For more information please read SurveyMonkey's Cookies section below and its Respondent Cookies Policy. After completion of a survey, in most cases, you will be redirected to SurveyMonkey's website and treated as a website visitor where other cookies may be used so you should read the Website Visitor section if this is of interest to you.
   Examples:
   SurveyMonkey uses page tags to allow the email sender (for a survey or form for example) to measure the performance of email messaging and to learn how to improve email deliverability and open rates. SurveyMonkey also uses cookies to ensure a respondent can only take a survey once (where the Creator has set this function) and to track completion rates of surveys.
- Contact Information.
   As a Respondent, SurveyMonkey only uses contact information to respond to an inquiry which you submit to them.
   Examples:
   SurveyMonkey's customer support team uses your email address to communicate with you if you have contacted them

about a survey, form, application or questionnaire you received, but it will not send marketing to you unless you have otherwise opted-in to marketing.

• How you use SurveyMonkey's services (applicable to survey Respondents only).
SurveyMonkey uses information about how you use its services to improve these services for you and all users.
Examples:
SurveyMonkey collects information about the types of questions you answer. This data will be aggregated and anonymized so SurveyMonkey can examine patterns in terms of respondent preferences when submitting responses (see further below in the Information for Survey Respondent section). SurveyMonkey collects and uses all this data for its legitimate interests like helping them improve the experience for respondents (so that questions are easier to answer), to understand industry trends in and to help improve the completion rates on surveys/forms.
Surveymonkey will also use usage information such as the type of survey, form, questionnaire or application that you answered to personalize products it shows you on completion of a survey when you are redirected to its website.

• Device and browser data.
SurveyMonkey uses device data both to troubleshoot problems with its service and to make improvements to it. SurveyMonkey also infers your geographic location based on your IP address.
Other Examples:
SurveyMonkey collects this to ensure that service experience works well across all possible devices and to infer geographic location to produce aggregated data around Respondent location trends. SurveyMonkey also wants to use this information to provide an additional data layer to Creators so that it can filter responses by e.g. inferred geographic location. Note however, that SurveyMonkey does not collect precise GPS coordinate location. SurveyMonkey just infers location from IP address. Finally SurveyMonkey will use this information to compare and look at trends on how its service operates and how you interact with surveys, on different browsers and devices.

• Log data.
SurveyMonkey uses log data for many different business purposes to include:
- To monitor abuse and troubleshoot.
- To create new services, features, content or make recommendations.
- To track behavior at the aggregate/anonymous level to identify and understand trends in the various interactions with its services.
- To fix bugs and troubleshoot product functionality.
Examples:
Your IP address is used to ensure that you do not complete the same survey, form, application or questionnaire twice if the creator has included settings to avoid this (ballot stuffing), for abuse monitoring purposes (so SurveyMonkey can identify a Respondent who abused the survey taking experience in a manner contrary to its usage policies or to facilitate the Creator in complying with its own legal obligations. SurveyMonkey also collects log data to collate aggregated data and metrics on activity at a non-identifying level and so that it can identify trends in survey taking over time.

• Third parties and integrations.
SurveyMonkey will collect and use information from third parties and integration partners to facilitate Creators in sending surveys/forms/applications/questionnaires to you.

• Machine learning.
SurveyMonkey will use machine learning techniques on response data, metadata (as described above) and cookie data, in order to provide Creators with useful and relevant insights from the data it has collected using its services, to build features, improve its services and to develop aggregated data products. You can read more about this in relation to surveys below.

• To manage its services SurveyMonkey will also internally use your information and data, for the following limited purposes:
• To enforce its agreements where applicable.
• To prevent potentially illegal activities.
• To screen for and prevent undesirable or abusive activity. For example, SurveyMonkey has automated systems that screen content for phishing activities, spam, and fraud.
• Legal uses.
To respond to legal requests or prevent fraud, SurveyMonkey may need to disclose any information or data it holds about you. If it receives a subpoena or other legal request, SurveyMonkey may need to inspect the data it holds to determine how to respond.

3. Use of survey responses (SurveyMonkey surveys only)

In general survey responses to SurveyMonkey surveys are controlled and managed by the Creator (the person who sent or deployed that survey). In those instances SurveyMonkey is only processing those responses on behalf of the Creator.
Creator and Respondent trust is paramount to everything SurveyMonkey does and so when it does use data about Respondents, SurveyMonkey puts Creators and Respondents first. When SurveyMonkey does analysis of response data it only does so once it has ensured the anonymity of individual respondents (by aggregating and anonymizing the data).
Its goal is to improve the user experience across SurveyMonkey survey services while maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of responses.
SurveyMonkey goes into more detail below on how it uses survey data. A Creator has some controls over how SurveyMonkey uses responses in its Account settings and may have turned off its ability to use responses where it is feature linked.

SurveyMonkey uses data in the ways described below, for legitimate interests pursued by it which are described in this section:
The data impacted by this section includes:
• Survey type, question type and responses (at an aggregated and anonymized level only)
• Device data
• Log data

SurveyMonkey will use automated processes and machine learning, to analyze survey responses, which in turn helps them to:
• Aggregate response data and activity:
SurveyMonkey will aggregate responses, activity and behavior of Respondents so that it can identify trends, build product features that optimize responses, make product recommendations and provide guidance on which products and services work best in different scenarios. These product features also provide feedback and recommendations to increase response rates. For an example of this check out how SurveyMonkey Genius works. See more about SurveyMonkey Genius here.
• Extract and analyze usage patterns: By understanding response data and Respondent interaction in different types of surveys SurveyMonkey can:
• improve its services and ease of use: for example, it might

identify when respondents prefer multiple choice versus open text questions and make predictive response suggestions when certain question types are selected. SurveyMonkey might also use this data to help improve analysis of responses,
• undertake personalization for survey Creators and Respondents (for example by customizing the page on its website which a Respondent sees at the end of a survey - See more about Customizing Survey End Page here.). If a Respondent does not want to be included in this personalization it can clear the cookies in its browser settings after taking a survey,
• improve user experience (for example, by collecting and using device and browser information from Respondents to improve how its survey service operates on those devices and in those browsers), and
• identify insightful data trends (which never identifies any individuals).

4. Information you share

Many of SurveyMonkey's services let you share information with others. Remember that when you share information publicly, it can be indexable by search engines. SurveyMonkey's services provide you with different options on sharing and deleting your content but it cannot delete content from search engines so you need to be careful about information you make public.

5. Information SurveyMonkey shares: Partners and Integrations

SurveyMonkey does not share your information or data with third parties outside SurveyMonkey except in the following limited circumstances:
• If you are a Creator that is part of an Enterprise team using SurveyMonkey your account information and data will be shared with the primary administrator(s) and your survey data may also be visible to other members in your team with whom you share your surveys or with whom you collaborate.
• To help SurveyMonkey provide certain aspects of its services it uses its affiliates and trusted key partners – in particular, it engages third parties to:
• facilitate its email collectors for sending surveys by email to Respondents.
• facilitate customers in making credit card payments.
• deliver and help them to track its marketing and advertising content.
• help them track website conversion success metrics.
• manage its sales and customer support services to you.

SurveyMonkey enters into confidentiality and data processing terms with partners to ensure they comply with high levels of confidentiality and best practice in privacy and security standards and it regularly reviews these standards and practices.
• On your instructions, SurveyMonkey shares your information or data if you choose to use an integration in conjunction with SurveyMonkey services, to the extent necessary to facilitate that use. See further information here on SurveyMonkey's API partners.
• SurveyMonkey also has to share information or data in order to:
• meet any applicable law, regulation, legal process or enforceable governmental request.
• enforce applicable policies, including investigation of potential violations.
• detect, prevent, or otherwise address fraud, security or technical issues.
• protect against harm to the rights, property or safety of its users, the public or to SurveyMonkey and/or as required or permitted by law.

6. Cookies

SurveyMonkey and its partners uses cookies and similar technologies on its websites. For more information see its Cookies Policy.
SurveyMonkey uses certain cookies, as described in its Cookies Policy and in its Privacy Policy, that you agree to when you use its sites and, in the case of some cookies, for legitimate interests of delivering and optimizing its services (where the cookie delivers essential functionality). Cookies are small bits of data SurveyMonkey stores on the device you use to access its services so it can recognize repeat users. Each cookie expires after a certain period of time, depending on what SurveyMonkey uses it for. SurveyMonkey uses cookies and similar technologies for several reasons:
• To gather metrics about your survey taking experience.
• For example, it will collect data about the number of clicks it took Respondents to complete a survey, whether it left and returned to a survey, whether it skipped parts of a survey and how long it took to complete the survey and other details about the survey taking. However, this information is collated and kept at an aggregated and anonymized level only.
• To make its site easier to use.
• Creators if you use the "Remember me" feature when you sign into your account, SurveyMonkey stores your username in a cookie to make it quicker for you to sign in whenever you return to SurveyMonkey.
• For security reasons.
• SurveyMonkey uses cookies to authenticate your identity and confirm whether you are currently logged into SurveyMonkey or determine if an incident impacts you.
• To provide you with personalized content.
• SurveyMonkey stores user preferences, your default language, device and browser information, your profile information which includes, the level of usage of service and the web-pages on its site which you visit, so it can personalize the content you see.
• To improve its services.
• SurveyMonkey uses cookies to measure your usage of its websites and track referral data, as well as to occasionally display different versions of content to you. This information helps SurveyMonkey to develop and improve its services (it helps it focus on the parts of the service you seem most interested in) and optimize the content it display to you (which may include marketing content).
• To advertise to you.
• SurveyMonkey, or its service providers and other third parties it works with, places cookies when you visit its website and other websites or when you open emails that it sends you, in order to provide you with more tailored marketing content (about its services or other services), and to evaluate whether this content is useful or effective. For instance, SurveyMonkey evaluates which ads are clicked on most often, and whether those clicks lead users to make better use of its tools, features and services. If you don't want to receive ads that are tailored to you based on your online activity, you may "opt out" of many of the companies that are involved in such tailoring by going to https://www.aboutads.info, https://preferences-mgr.truste.com/ or, if you're located in the European Union, at https://www.youronlinechoices.eu. Opting out in this way does not mean you will not receive any ads; it just means that you will not receive ads from such companies that have been tailored to you based on your activities and inferred preferences.
• Google Analytics.
• In addition to the above, SurveyMonkey has implemented on its websites and other services certain Google Analytics features that support Display Advertising, including re-targeting. Visitors to its websites may opt out of certain types of Google Analytics

tracking, customize the Google Display Network ads by using the Google Ad Preferences Manager and learn more about how Google serves ads by viewing its Customer Ads Help Center. If you do not wish to participate in Google Analytics, you may also download the Google Analytics opt-out browser add-on.

You can choose to remove or disable cookies via your browser settings.

7. Security

SurveyMonkey has a security statement related to its self-serve businesses (SurveyMonkey and Wufoo) available to view here. For information about security related to its other business lines you can speak to a sales representative by completing the form here.

8. Data Retention

If you hold an account with SurveyMonkey it does not delete the data in your account – you are responsible for and control the time periods for which you retain this data. There are controls in your account where you can delete data at the account level (all data in your account) and at the response level. If you are a Respondent, you will need to ask the Creator how long your responses will be stored in SurveyMonkey services.

SurveyMonkey also describes the expiry periods for cookies on its websites in its cookies policy.

9. Safety of Minors

Our services are not intended for and may not be used by minors. "Minors" are individuals under the age of 13 (or under a higher age if permitted by the laws of its residence). SurveyMonkey does not knowingly collect personal data from Minors or allow them to register. If it comes to its attention that SurveyMonkey has collected personal data from a Minor, it may delete this information without notice. If you have reason to believe that this has occurred, please contact customer support.

10. EU-U.S. Privacy Shield and Swiss-U.S. Privacy Shield.

SurveyMonkey Europe UC has entered into contractual terms to include standard contractual clauses with SurveyMonkey Inc. for the transfer of data to SurveyMonkey Inc. as part of delivery of service. SurveyMonkey Inc. is located in the United States and accordingly, data (to include Respondent data) will be transferred to the United States.

SurveyMonkey Inc. participates in and has certified its compliance with the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield Framework and Swiss-U.S. Privacy Shield. SurveyMonkey is committed to subjecting all personal information and data received from European Union (EU) member countries and Switzerland, in reliance on the Privacy Shield Framework, to the Framework's applicable Principles. To learn more about the Privacy Shield Framework, visit the U.S. Department of Commerce's Privacy Shield List. https://www.privacyshield.gov/. SurveyMonkey also complies with the Privacy Shield Principles for all onward transfers of personal data from the EU and Switzerland, including the onward transfer liability provisions.

When SurveyMonkey receives personal information under the Privacy Shield and then transfers it to a third-party service provider acting as agent on SurveyMonkey's behalf, SurveyMonkey has certain liability under the Privacy Shield if both (i) the agent processes the information in a manner inconsistent with the Privacy Shield and (ii) SurveyMonkey is responsible for the event giving rise to the damage. With respect to personal data received or transferred pursuant to the Privacy Shield Framework, SurveyMonkey is subject to the investigatory and enforcement powers of the U.S. Federal Trade Commission. In certain situations, SurveyMonkey may be required to disclose personal data in response to lawful requests

by public authorities, including to meet national security or law enforcement requirements.

Please contact SurveyMonkey as described in Section 14 below if you have any concerns or complaints of any nature. If you have an unresolved privacy or data use concern that SurveyMonkey has not addressed satisfactorily, please contact its U.S.-based third party dispute resolution provider, (free of charge) at https://feedback-form.truste.com/watchdog/request.

Under certain conditions, more fully described on the Privacy Shield website https://www.privacyshield.gov/article?id=How-to-Submit-a-Complaint, you may invoke binding arbitration when other dispute resolution procedures have been exhausted.

11. Changes to its privacy policy

SurveyMonkey can make changes to this Privacy Policy from time to time. It will identify the changes it has made on its Privacy Policy page. In circumstances where a change will materially change the way in which SurveyMonkey collects or uses your personal information or data, it will send a notice of this change to all of its account holders.

12. Personalized marketing

You can opt-out from direct marketing in your account and SurveyMonkey provides opt-out options in all direct marketing emails. Finally, if you do not wish to see personalized marketing content on the web related to its service you can clear the cookies in your browser settings. See SurveyMonkey's Help Center article on how to do this here.

13. Who is my data controller?

As mentioned above – all response data at an individual level is controlled by the Creator. SurveyMonkey can be a data controller of data about Respondents only in the very limited ways described in the section here called "How SurveyMonkey uses the information it collect - Respondent". To the extent that is the case it has identified the correct controller below.

For Creators, Respondents, Website Visitors and Panel who are addressed in this privacy policy and who are located outside the United States, your data controller is SurveyMonkey Europe UC to the extent that it is processing your personal data.

14. Your rights

Some of you (in particular, European users and those whose information SurveyMonkey receives under the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield) have certain legal rights to obtain information about whether it holds personal information about them, to access personal information it holds about them, and to obtain its correction, update, amendment or deletion in appropriate circumstances. Some of these rights may be subject to some exceptions or limitations. SurveyMonkey will respond to your request to exercise these rights within a reasonable time (and in all cases within 30 days of receiving a request).

Rights which you are entitled to are:
• Data access rights
• Right to restrict processing
• Right of Rectification
• Right to Erasure (Right to be Forgotten)
• Right to object to processing
• Right to withdraw consent; and
• Data portability rights

Where you have responded to a survey, form, questionnaire or application sent to you by a Creator, using a SurveyMonkey service, you will need to reach out directly to that individual or organization to discuss managing, deleting, accessing, restricting access to

or otherwise withdrawing consent for use of, the information which you provided to them in your responses. SurveyMonkey does not control your response data and, accordingly, is not in a position to directly handle these requests in relation to that data. If you are having difficulties finding this Creator you can contact SurveyMonkey through its support team and it will try its best to help you. Where you wish to exercise any of the above rights with respect to the categories of Respondent data described in this policy for which SurveyMonkey is a data controller, please contact it here. See more information on how to contact SurveyMonkey and how to make complaints in its privacy policy

15. Exercising your rights

Our Contact Information for Privacy Inquiries
SurveyMonkey Inc.
1   Curiosity Way
     San Mateo, California 94403
     United States
     privacy@surveymonkey.com
     SurveyMonkey Europe UC
2   Shelbourne Buildings,
     Second Floor,
     Shelbourne Rd,
     Ballsbridge
     Dublin 4,
     Ireland
     dpo@surveymonkey.com

Complaints
     If you are resident in the European Union and you are dissatisfied with how SurveyMonkey has managed a complaint you have submitted, you are entitled to contact your local data protection supervisory authority. As SurveyMonkey Europe UC operates its business in Ireland, it operates under the remit of the Irish Office of the Data Protection Commissioner (see: ODPC Website)

Institutions approached for the Mapping Diversities Survey

The following institutions, spread across three cities in each country, were approached by email or phone in a bid to reach the targeted 15 number of institutions per country thought were being sought for participation in the Mapping Diversities survey:

In Belgium (20):
Theatre National,
La Monnaie,
Ancienne Belgique,
KVS,
Couleur Café,
Forêt National,
Africa Museum,
Kunsten Festival des Arts,
Museum of Fine Arts,
MAS,
De Singel,
Arenbergschouwburg,
MHKA,
Sportpaleis,
Stadsschouwburg,
Theatre de Liège,
Opéra Royal de la Wallonie,
Festival de Liège,
Reflektor,
and Musée de la Boverie.

In Germany (18):
Martin Gropius Bau,
Hamburger Bahnhof,
Haus der Kulturen der Welt,
Kunstwerke KW,
Berliner Festspiele,
Sophiensäle,
Ballhaus Naunynstraße,
Maxim Gorki Theater,
Hebbel am Ufer,
Thalia Theater,
Kampnagel theater,
Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe,
Deichtorhallen,
Museum am Rotenbaum,
Münchener Kammerspiele,
Haus der Kunst,
Pinakothek der Moderne,
and Münchener Staatsoper.

In Austria (15):
Kunsthalle Wien,
Kunsthistorisches Museum,
Albertina Museum,
Weltmuseum,
Museum of Applied Arts,
Vienna (Museum für angewandte Kunst),
Wiener Festwochen,
Tanzquartier Wien,
Ars Electronica,
Steirischer herbst,
Schauspielhaus Graz,
Oper Graz,
Offenes Kunsthaus,
Lentos Museum,
Ars Electronica,
Landestheatre Linz

Biographies of the Authors

VÉRONIQUE CLETTE-GAKUBA is a sociology researcher at the METICES research centre (Université Libre de Bruxelles). She is finalizing a PhD on the links between sub-Saharan migration, art and colonialism in Brussels, a multicultural city and a postcolonial metropolis (research funded by Innoviris and conducted under the direction of Nouria Ouali), entitled (provisionally) The unfolding of an artistic Sub-Saharan territory in Brussels : how visibility is negotiated in new ways.

SANDRINE COLARD is an art history professor (Rutgers University, USA), a writer and independent curator based in New York and Brussels. As a specialist of modern and contemporary African arts (PhD Columbia University), she has been the curator of the 6th Lubumbashi Biennale (DRC, 2019), and of *The Way She Looks: A History of Female Gazes in African Portraiture: Photographs from the Walther Collection* (Ryerson Image Center, Toronto, 2019), among others. She is at work on her book about the history of photography in the Democratic Republic of Congo (awarded 2019-2020 Ford Foundation Fellowship).

LOUCKA FIAGAN is a Belgian native and multidisciplinary artist. He is currently studying Choreography in the ISAC department of the Royal Academy of Beaux Arts in Brussels. Before this he was studying Sociology at the Université de Saint Louis. During his sociological studies he joined the multidisciplinary collective Chapter 01 with whom he partook in organising artistic happenings in Brussels and Antwerpen. He is currently a member of the duo Wedntknwyet.

KRZYSZTOF GUTFRAŃSKI is a curator, editor and researcher. His contextual research practice is pivoted on issues of social engagement, alternative education, theory of value, and non-functional thinking in the era of systemic and technological transformation. He has worked in the curatorial departments of a number of Polish institutions, including the Centre of Contemporary Art in Toruń, the National Gallery of Art Zachęta in Warsaw, and the Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw, where he is currently Chief Editor of the quarterly online magazine, *Obieg*.

He contributed research to leading Polish- and Brazilian NGOs and European and other projects, including: *Obieg* issue on *Dis-Othering, País do futuro* at Ateliê Espai in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, *Trauma & Revival* at BOZAR and Fondazione Pistoletto; and the *Game of States* archive presented at *Le Bord des Mondes* at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. He pursues a long-term project on the alternative economy of agromining and the impacts of terra- deformation in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais since 2014. Gutfranski was also Chief Editor of *Alternativa* for the Wyspa Art Institute in Gdańsk(2010-2015).

His practice involves extensive work in editorial research focused on publications in the era of information overload.

MARIA HEROLD studied Musicology at the University of Vienna and is currently attending a course on Music Economics. Since 2013 she has been working as project coordinator at VIDC/kulturen in bewegung, and is coordinating projects with a focus on equality in music, gender and cultural exchange. She was project coordinator of the Austrian activities within this Creative Europe Project.

WOUTER HILLAERT is a Belgian cultural journalist. For 15 years he has been working as a freelance theatre critic for the Flemish newspapers De Morgen and De Standaard. In 2003 he co-founded the free cultural magazine *rekto:verso* on arts and society (www.rektoverso.be) of which he is still one of the coordinators. His main topics are theatre, cultural policy and community arts. In 2014 he initiated the Flemish civil movement "Hart boven Hard", and is still its spokesperson.

TONICA HUNTER moved to Vienna in 2014 to work at a migration policy think tank where she specialised in East African migration between the Horn of Africa and Europe. Born in London, of Jamaican heritage, she is a creator and practitioner of various community-focused strategies which promote activism through arts and culture. In this capacity, she has (co) founded and worked with various collectives (Sound of Blackness, Series:Black) and projects in Vienna which use sound and redefine social space and contribute to conversations and thinking on diversity in Austria. Tonica is lead researcher and co-curator at Kulturen in Bewegung, for the *Mapping Diversity* research project which assesses diversity in European (Austrian, German, Belgian) arts institutions in particular regards to African art and artists. Tonica also currently works in Research and Development within the Austrian National Library's Digital department on a project which digitises archives on migration, women and gender and social movements.

AMA KORANTENG-KUMI is the Founder of *Creating Edges*, Project Lead and Publicist. Her projects are at the cutting edge of arts, politics, empowerment and eco-well-being. She acts in an advisory capacity with diverse organisations committed to developing inclusive societies. With a Master in Gender Studies, she is the diversity and inclusion advisor for *De Museumstichting*, the umbrella organization comprising of three museums in Antwerp. She lives alternately in Amsterdam and Antwerp.

MARISSA LOBO is a migrant activist and artist born in Bahia, Brazil. She holds a MA in Post Conceptual Art Practice. Since 2014, Ms Lôbo is a doctoral student of philosophy, researching artistic decolonial studies at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. She was part of the scientific board for the publication Vocabulary of decoloniality (2019). Since February 2019 she works at Kulturen in bewegung as coordinator of diverse cultural projects. For the past sixteen years Ms. Lôbo has led cultural work at the migrant women's organization, MAIZ, Austria, where she developed projects which programmatically combine politics, education and art. Ms Lôbo is also the co-curator of "Bodies of Knowledge", co-director of Kültür gemma!, a support program for underprivileged artists and cultural workers in Vienna, and co-curator of the project Night School, about education and politics, an evening school where thinking, learning and teaching,

KATHLEEN LOUW holds Master's degrees in economics (Université Catholique de Louvain) and African Studies (UCLA). She worked as a project coordinator at the Getty Conservation Institute (LA), on the topic of cultural heritage in Africa and China. Since 2011 she is institutional advisor at BOZAR. For 8 years she led the Institution's Africa desk which saw the development of the Afropolitan platform and various exhibitions in partnership with curators of African descent. She has led the EU project *Art at Work* and is currently managing this Creative Europe project and a DEVCO project *Culture at Work Africa*.

Brussels born **NAOMI NTAKIYICA** holds a Master's degree in Slavic Studies and in Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies (KULeuven). She has addressed issues of racism in Russia, and female pious agency among Muslim women in Kyrgyzstan. Her particular interest in Gender and Islam in Central Asia has led her to her current research project on female religious authorities in Kyrgyzstan, under the supervision of professor Stephan-Emmrich. She has worked in Brussels as a counsellor for newcomers at the Flemish Agency for Integration and as an event organiser and researcher in this Creative Europe project for the Centre for Fine Arts, BOZAR. She is currently pursuing a PhD at Humbölt University.

JOHNY PITTS is a writer, author of the award-winning publication 'Afropean: Documenting Black Europe', photographer, and broadcast journalist. He has received various awards for his work exploring Afro-European identity.

JONAS TINIUS is an anthropologist of art and a post-doctoral research fellow on the Making Differences Project (Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage), based at the Department of European Ethnology (Humboldt-Universität). He explores how notions of alterity, otherness, and diversity are engaged through curatorial practices in Berlin. With Prof Roger Sansi, he convenes the Anthropology and the Arts Network of the European Association of Social Anthropologists.

YOUNES VAN DEN BROECK aka Spitler is a visual and street art artist. He transforms his critique on society and social engagement into art, word and image. He is part of a new art movement called Fokovism that is opposed to forms of education that limit the individuality, style and freedom of expression of artists. In 2018, he received the Queen Mathilde Prize in collaboration with Commusaic vzw for the Beats and Bars project. He also gave workshops in prisons in New York and Belgium.

Acknowledgements

Partners

THE CENTRE FOR FINE ARTS (BOZAR)
is Belgium's largest cultural institution, welcoming over one million visitors each year to nearly six thousand exhibitions, concerts and events in a landmark building in Brussels. BOZAR is a multidisciplinary platform for contemporary intercultural dialogue, with an international mission guided by a commitment to artistic excellence and social justice. BOZAR 's AFROPOLITAN platform was started to give visibility to African and Diaspora artists in Europe, to engage the mind, mix audiences, and open up perspectives for the new narratives at play in Africa and Europe.

SAVVY CONTEMPORARY
in Berlin is a space for exhibitions, discussions and conviviality, a library, archives and various programs that encourage to unlearn and challenge our modes of seeing, listening and thinking. It is a space wherein epistemological disobedience and delinking (Walter Mignolo) are practiced, and it is a space for decolonial practices and aesthetics. We propose to move with Sylvia Wynter "towards the Human, after Man".

KULTUREN IN BEWEGUNG
in Vienna is the culture department of the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC), which presents cultural productions from the global south and cultural projects by migrant artists based in Austria to foster international cultural exchange; and to contribute to a fair and united world by encouraging intercultural dialogue.

Associate Partners

AFRØPEAN
in London is an online multimedia, multidisciplinary journal exploring the social, cultural and aesthetic interplay of Black and European cultures, and the synergy of styles and ideas brought about because of this union.

UJAZDOWSKI CASTLE CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART
in Warsaw is a place where art is made and exhibited, where it is considered a means of exploring the contemporary world. Experimental and transdisciplinary, the U-jazdowski's program stimulates artistic creativity at the junction of the visual arts, the performing arts, film, music, literature, and the humanities. Published by U-jazdowski *Obieg* the Polish-English online quarterly, combines different formulas of talking about contemporary art and culture, such as criticism, theory, essay, imagery, and social-media content. *Obieg* stems from the need to update the art map, explore artistic geographies, and create new networks of connection between Central and Eastern Europe and the countries of the so-called global south.

ROYAL MUSEUM FOR CENTRAL AFRICA (RMCA)
in Tervuren is a centre for knowledge and resources on Africa, in particular Central Africa, in an historical, contemporary, and global context. The museum exhibits unique collections. It is a place of memory on the colonial past and strives to be a dynamic platform for exchanges and dialogues between cultures and generations.

This publication recounts the trials and tribulations of a Creative Europe collaborative project designed to engage with the need to deconstruct the practice of forms of "othering" in European cultural institutions.

Inspired by SAVVY Contemporary's call for a recalibrating switch to "dis-othering", six European institutions joined forces in 2017 to initiate a delicate process of self-reflection.

Together the partners produced an exhibition, symposia, talks, a festival, a mapping-research initiative, and a residency programme. Events in Berlin, Brussels, Vienna, and Warsaw assembled artists, communities, thinkers, activists and people from all walks of life to take an honest, informed, and sometimes uncomfortable appraisal of the othering that still takes place within European cultural institutions and how to begin to redress it.

The project closes with this publication, which is itself a critique of the two-year experiment – with its set of paradoxes, pitfalls, hard truths and positive outcomes. It is intended to call attention to the work that lies ahead.

Participating institutions:
Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR), Belgium
SAVVY Contemporary, Germany
Kulturen in Bewegung, Austria
Africa Museum, Belgium
AFROPEAN, United Kingdom
Ujazdowski Castle Centre
for Contemporary Art, Poland