

ENTANGLED ARCHIVES: REPARATIVE CRITICAL PRACTICES IN SITUATIONS “BEYOND REPAIR”¹

Katrine Dirckinck-Holmfeld

ABSTRACT:

In this essay, I explore the founding violence that the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts can be said to rest on. I propose to view the building of Charlottenborg Castle which houses the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts as a “material witness” (Schuppli) to colonial history. I suggest that the building forms part of a material “cultural archive” (Wekker) of colonialism that can be seen as an *entangled archive*, that is simultaneously an entanglement of overlapping histories, and an instrument that disentangled and disconnected communities affected by colonialism by producing a radical cut between the colonized communities and their creative expression. By juxtaposing paintings from the colonial era with contemporary art works the essay explores the following questions: *What does it mean to conduct art education on such contested grounds? What are the ramifications of colonial-modernity within the art institutions today? And how does it continue (indirectly or directly) to distribute and determine what counts as a work of art and who counts as a subject?*

KEYWORDS:

Colonial archives, reparative practices, affect, visual art, art education

Dear Christian Hansen Ernst [if I may?]

*Allow me to address you across time and space.
So many questions are evoked in me
by this double portrait of you and U.F. Gyldenløve.
I apologize for any discomfort this might cause
The earring—is that mother of pearl?
Silver chain collar around your neck,
Was that to indicate that you were enslaved?
The sash belt around your waist, is that Madras fabric?
We are told that your name was Christian Hansen Ernst,*

*But was that your real name?
Your British name was Christian Henry Ernest.
But what name did your parents give you?
It is said that you were born sometime around 1660
It is said that you started working for Gyldenløve in London,
when Gyldenløve was a dispatch for Denmark-Norway to Charles
II of England.
Gyldenløve was the illegitimate son of King Frederik III and the
governor of Norway.²
In 1672 Gyldenløve erected the Charlottenborg Castle, [in your
time Gyldenløve's palace],
which today houses the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts.*

*You look back at me, into the future,
into a future, where I am standing now.
Or where I was standing until recently,
the Art Academy.*

*It is said that one of your tasks for Gyldenløve was to entertain the
mistresses that Gyldenløve was flirting with.
I cannot help to think of this each time I pass the room
“Sengekammeret” (the bed chamber), which is still the official name
of one of the meeting rooms in the Art Academy, which was the
bedchamber of Gyldenløve.*

[CUT]

[FAST FORWARD]

In 2020, following the Black Lives Matter demonstrations and a worldwide call to decolonize the art academies and universities, the artist collective Anonymous Artists removed the plaster cast copy of a bust of Frederik V from its acropodium in the Assembly Hall of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and submerged it in Copenhagen harbor. Frederik V incorporated the Asiatic Company and the West Indian Guinean Company, which managed the slave trade and the plantation complex under his absolute power, the same year he founded the Art Academy in 1754. By returning the plaster cast copy of the bust of Frederik V back to the elements—the harbor as a center for the colonial trade—Anonymous Artists wanted to articulate the ways in which the colonial era is invisible, but still has direct consequences for minoritized people inside and outside the Art Academy as well as cultural institutions in Denmark. The press release accompanying the video documentation of the happening stated: “We want an art world that relates



Dobbelt portrett af Ulrik Fredrik Gyldenløve og Christian Hansen Ernst, (double portrait of U.F. Gyldenløve and Christian Hansen Ernst) artist and year unknown. Eidsvoll 1814, Norway.

to and takes responsibility—not only for the actions of the past, but for the ways in which colonialism is still active today.”³ The act was carried out in solidarity with people in Ghana, Kalaallit Nunaat, the Virgin Islands, India and elsewhere, who still live in the aftermath of Danish colonialism. The video documentation of the happening unleashed an exorbitant amount of white rage in the Danish media. Police, journalists, and a far-right artist went on campus to apprehend the art activists. I decided to take the responsibility for the artistic happening and was immediately expelled from my position at the Art Academy and my ongoing postdoctoral research project “Entangled Archives” as well as the course “Min(d)ing the Academy,” which I was teaching, were discontinued.

In this essay, I lay bare the threads of the unfinished research project to explore the founding violence that the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts can be said to rest on.⁴ I propose to view the building of Charlottenborg Castle which houses the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts as a “material witness”⁵ to colonial history, and point to the ways in which the foundation of the Art Academy, and the birth of Enlightenment ideas of “free” and “fine” art in Denmark, was co-constructed with colonial modernity. I suggest that the building forms part of a material “cultural archive”⁶ of colonialism that can be seen as an *entangled archive*. In an entangled system the constituent parts cannot be understood and analyzed as individual particles but are an inseparable mechanism. *Entanglement* here is proposed as a prism to look at how colonialism radically reconfigured the materiality, space, and time in a matrix between practices, communities, and continents. By understanding the colonial *archive* not as an isolated material repository, but in light of Michel Foucault’s concept of the archive, as continuously constitutive and productive of bodies, politics and practices in the present⁷, I propose that the colonial archive is simultaneously an entanglement of overlapping histories, and an instrument that disentangled and disconnected communities affected by colonialism by producing a radical cut between the colonized communities and their creative expression e.g. through the looting of materials and artefacts, removal of archives, prohibition of creative expressions, and spiritual practices. The birth of the Art Academy in Denmark coincided with the colonial and imperial project’s extraction of people, goods, and natural resources in the colonies. While the co-construction of art and colonial modernity is by no

means understudied,⁸ to my knowledge, a critical dialogue has been lacking amongst artists, art educators, and art students in Denmark around the following questions:

What does it mean to conduct art education on such contested grounds?

What are the ramifications of colonial-modernity within the art institutions today?

And how does it continue (indirectly or directly) to distribute and determine who counts as a painting⁹ and who counts as a subject?

To explore these questions, I propose to develop “reparative critical practices in situations ‘beyond repair,’”¹⁰ by creating alternative infrastructures through which artists across geographies can create small acts of repair, resistance, and interventions in the colonial archive. I suggest that reparative critical practices can be mobilized in what I term here situations “beyond repair.” Following David Scott, some events, like New World slavery, are not repairable; they are “beyond repair.” Situations beyond repair do not preclude, but rather call for reparative practices that work to rebuild broken bonds between communities and their creative expression.¹¹

These acts and interventions formulate what we might situate with Édouard Glissant as a “poetics of relations,” where the constituent parts are entangled and relational while at the same time remain opaque, untranslatable, and illegible.¹²

In this essay I will depart from a speculative close reading of two portraits: the “double portrait of U.F. Gyldenløve and Christian Hansen Ernst,” (artist and year unknown) at Eidsvoll 1814, Norway, and the *Portræt af Otto Marstrands to døtre og deres vestindiske barnepige, Justina Antoine, i Frederiksberg Have*, (portrait of Otto Marstrand’s two daughters and their West Indian “nanny” Justina Antoine, in Frederiksberg Garden) painted by Wilhelm Marstrand, 1857, SMK: Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen. The aim is to continue to formulate an entangled artistic research method. In reference to Glissant, I understand artistic research as the right to remain “opaque.”¹³ Styling an unknowability which recognizes difference does not mean understanding otherness by making it transparent. Rather, it embraces unintelligibility, impenetrability, and confusion. Artistic research then comes to present itself as noise,¹⁴ a poetics that is not always easy to situate within conventional forms of scholarly work or artistic work, but

cuts and augments existing forms, styles a future practice to come, and forms new communities. As we run up against the onto-epistemological limits in society that govern who counts as a subject,¹⁵ and what counts as knowledge or a work of art, artistic research is something we cannot afford not to do.

The essay itself moves across time, periods, and styles, which do not have much in common, other than sharing some sort of proximity to the baroque Charlottenborg Castle, on Kgs. Nytorv (The King's New Square) no. 1 in Copenhagen. Throughout the essay, I refer to Black Audio Film Collective's (BAFC) seminal work *Last Angel of History*, and what Kara Keeling has termed "algorithmic editing,"¹⁶ through which the film's main protagonist the "Data Thief" is able to edit, animate, and combine images from the database of "human history"; attuning to the sonorous and affective reverberations of the archive, traveling across time and space in search of crossroads, where he makes archaeological digs for fragments of history in search of the code to transform the future. Inspired by BAFC, the Data Thief is transformed into a "Data Thief | Data Giver,"¹⁷ to unsettle and question who is "thieving" [sic] the archives, since Danish officials removed the archival records from the Virgin Islands in 1919, two years after Denmark sold the islands to the United States, dislocating the archives and access to historical sources as well as the right to ownership over the writing of histories.¹⁸

In the following I will further explore reparative critical practices in situations "beyond repair" by teasing out the material and temporal entanglements of colonialism through two explorations of the reparative critical practice's engagement with materiality. I call this process "rematerialization" and the reparative critical practice's complex relationship with temporality through experiences of "temporal collapse."

REMATIALIZATION

The moment the video-documentation of the happening hit the media stream, it created a huge outcry from politicians, media, and cultural leaders alike, who demanded to "jail and handcuff the art activists" and compared the art happening with ISIS and the Taliban. A media post that was being published by all the major news channels in Denmark claimed that the plaster cast copy of the bust was an invaluable, "priceless Danish statue."¹⁹ It was a plaster cast copy made between the 1960s–1980s; it exists in numerous copies in Danish museums, institutions, and private

collections and the Art Academy Council still holds the bronze bust in their collection²⁰. I stated in a television interview that the copy of the bust, after having been submerged in the water had been “rematerialized,” meaning by this that a given material or object harbors the violent history of its own making in its very texture and materiality, and those materials can be opened up to a process in which the sedimented histories and practices become permeable, become subject to transformation. The notion was subjected to a great amount of bullying by the media and others. In the following I will carve out a notion of rematerialization.

Much of the public debate by historians following the event was centered around condemning the “historical claims” of “art activists” as “nonsense,” based on the argument that Denmark was not as efficient in the slave trade as other European nations, that most of the earnings came from the trade with China, that Denmark was neutral during the wars, etc.²¹ As colleagues from Kalaallit Nunaat commented, it is not a competition between the European nations to be the lesser bad colonizer.²² Because a national and hegemonic narrative of being the benevolent, humanitarian colonizer prevails in Denmark, any attempt to destabilize that narrative is met by defensiveness, denial, colonial oblivion and “white innocence.”²³ Danish self-understanding also contributes to willfully ignoring the complexity and entanglement of the transatlantic slave trade with the trade in the North Atlantic and the Indian Ocean as well as the human suffering (un)accounted for by the archive.²⁴ Since the colonial archive in Denmark, as well as the now digitized archival records, continue to be organized along the logics of the colonial architecture, and that architecture only accounts for the colonizing perspective, it cannot account for the human suffering. In addition, the archive is compartmentalizing the logs and ledgers into geographical areas that separates the activities of The Asiatic Company, The West Indian Guinean Company and the North Atlantic dependencies. As Lisa Lowe notes, it is “fair to observe that there is scarce attention to the *relationships* between the matters classified within distinct stores; the organization of archives discourages links between settler colonialism in North America and the West Indies and the African slave trade; or attention to the conjunction of the abolition of slavery and the importing of Chinese and South Asian indentured labor; or a correlation of the East Indies and China trades and the rise of the bourgeois Europe.”²⁵

By juxtaposing artistic research methods and artistic practices between former colonized countries, we can attune to other affective registers in the archive. This can help unlock stifled narratives and disentangle the Danish-Norwegian colonial project that is an entanglement between slave trade with humans from Ghana to the West Indies, the sugar plantation complex and the commercial imperialism conducted across the Indian Ocean littoral, the colonial and imperial projects in the North including Sápmi, Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland), Iceland, and the Faroese Islands. A trade that was tightly knotted to the birth of liberal humanism as an aesthetic project, in which aesthetics played a crucial role in granting civility to the white bourgeois European subject, while colonial subjects were turned into racialized labor.²⁶

Anonymous Artists' art happening specifically proposed to understand the transatlantic slave trade and the sugar plantation complex in their entanglement, and how the birth of the Art Academy cannot be disentangled from the colonial and imperial project.

REMATIALIZATION = [BRICKS: MATERIAL PRACTICES]
+ [NAME: DISCURSIVE PRACTICES]

If we were to return to the site of Charlottenborg and read the building as a “material witness” to the colonial history, then even the smallest brick might share a connectedness to that history. I borrow the term “material witness” from Susan Schuppli but deploy the concept in a slightly different manner. According to Schuppli,

material witnesses are nonhuman entities and machinic ecologies that archive their complex interactions with the world, producing ontological transformations and informatic dispositions that can be forensically decoded and reassembled back into a history. *Material witnesses* operate as double agents: harboring direct evidence of events as well as providing circumstantial evidence of the interlocutory methods and epistemic frameworks whereby such matter comes to be consequential.²⁷

While my aim here is not forensics, I expand the notion to include non-machinic materials that in their surface or texture register their [violent] history and their own making by drawing on Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Renu Bora's differentiation between texture with one x and two xx's. In a simplified manner “texxture” with two xx's enfolds the very history of its making in the texture

itself, while “textures” with only one x hide their own history in their polished surface, rendering their properties and histories invisible to their beholders.²⁸ As an example of texture with two xx’s, Sedgwick uses the hand-molded brick that reveals its own processes of making in its surface.

[BRICKS] If we brushed our fingers over the Charlottenborg’s red-brown bricks, what stories would they tell? The hand-molded bricks, with their sheen and scars, can be said to enfold the entangled network that the building forms part of in their very texture: There are conflicting narratives of where the bricks originate from. Some say that they were imported from Kalø Slotsruin (castle ruin) near Århus, which Gyldenløve oversaw, and were rebuilt into the baroque mansion known today as Charlottenborg. According to architect Ulla Lunn “the bricks are the so-called Dutch mops, which came to Copenhagen as imports (...) excess bricks from the construction were taken with the ships and used as ballast—and can be found in at least one building on St. John, one of the West Indian Islands.”²⁹ The bricks enfold that route and that violent history in their very texture: from Altona Hamburg to Kalø Slotsruin, Århus, then to be rematerialized into a Baroque Castle on Kgs. Nytorv, while other bricks were carried across the Middle Passage and incorporated into the new colonial buildings on St. John and St. Thomas.

[NAME] Gyldenløve gave the castle to the queen Charlotte Amalie, from whom the building has inherited its name: Charlottenborg. Charlotte Amalie is also the namesake of the capital on St. Thomas. In 1754 Frederik V, strongly urged by his Lord Chamberlain, A.G. Moltke, gave the building to the Royal Danish Art Academy. In the same year the king incorporated the Asiatic Company and Guinean West Indian Company under his absolute power.³⁰ The establishment of the Art Academy came about at a time when the Danish colonial and imperial project was at its peak,³¹ and thus it is the hypothesis of this essay that it was the wealth that came back from the colonies, including the sugar trade, that created the demand for educating artists and architects in Denmark that could erect the mansions, paint the portraits, and create the sculptures of the new sugar elite.³² The part of Copenhagen from Kgs. Nytorv to Amalienborg, named Frederiksstaden was built for the new elite.³³ Until the establishment of the Art Academy, artists and architects had mainly been imported from France and the Netherlands or had been working as craftsmen organized in guilds.

Up until the plaster copy of the bust of Frederik V was submerged into the harbor, the Art Academy and the copy-bust itself were whitewashing, literally disguising and forgetting its own history. As the copy-bust sank into the harbor that functioned as the center for the transatlantic slave trade, the oceanic routes and currents worked back on its texture. The polished surface was transformed, the hessian structures laid bare to reveal a texture that resurfaces what has been made invisible and silenced: the reproduction of racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia and other forms of oppression that have been exercised within the art academy and art institutions up until this very day. The white patriarchal form that radiates “rationality, liberty, equality, and authority”³⁴ was transformed into a concave form—as its negative other: the woman, the queer, the trans, the Black, indigenious, the disabled, the migrant, the refugee, the prisoner— as the outcasts of colonial modernity.

In the process of rematerialization, a massive amount of white rage was unleashed in the Danish media and on the Danish art scene. However, it also disentangled the form and made other, different narratives visible, it paved new pathways and created new collaborations and art collectives.

Rematerialization comes to form a Möbius-like movement, in which a given material both harbors the violent history of its own making in its very texture and materiality. By disentangling and reassembling these textures and materials, sedimented practices become permeable.

In *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*, Judith Butler shows how materiality is always already closely intertwined with discursive practices in which power is exercised upon and through the materiality of gendered, sexualized, and racialized bodies.³⁵ *Rematerialization* then becomes a possibility of rearticulation and remodulation, of working back on the materiality in which the hegemonic force that governs who counts as a subject, and which bodies that matter and are worth protecting in society are called into question. That transformation in turn can be recombined (indefinitely) into new narratives, or reparative critical practices that assemble the material fragments from a culture whose avowed desire has not been to sustain the subject. In that process of rematerialization, time itself becomes permeable into what we might term reparative temporality.

REPARATIVE TEMPORALITY: TEMPORAL COLLAPSE

Returning to the double portrait of Ernst and Gyldenløve:

*It is said that you went with Gyldenløve to Norway,
where you became a postmaster or “veier” in Krageø
and one of the first persons of African descent (known to the archives)
to become a civil servant in Norway-Denmark.*

*In 1689/94: you were brutally murdered by a man in Krageø.
according to some because of jealousy over a woman.
According to others because of jealousy over your position
as a state official.*

*Others claim that since there are no written sources stating
the reason for your death
it is all folk tales.*

*In Krageø there is still an alley named after your assassination:
Knivstikkermuet [knife-stabbing alley]
Until 2015 a placard showing a racialized caricature of you
with a knife pointed at it
hung in the alley.*

The tenses dizzy my consciousness.

The portrait collapses time

Between the time of slavery and the present moment:³⁶

2020: A young Danish-Tanzanian man, *Phillip Mbuji Johansen*, was brutally murdered by two white Danish men in the Danish island of Bornholm. Descriptions of the murder by the Danish newspaper Ekstra Bladet, in addition to torture, bore horrific similarities to the police officer Derek Chauvin's murderous act against George Floyd, with a knee pressed against the neck.³⁷ The murder took place shortly after one of the biggest Black Lives Matter protests in Denmark, which drew a record number of people to an afro-Danish, anti-racist demonstration. The demonstration was quickly condemned by politicians and media alike, creating caricatures and character assassinations of BLM Denmark's spokesperson, and condemning the protesters for taking to the streets during a pandemic. Those events make evident the entanglement between materiality and discourse and a lack of language for racism in Denmark. In Denmark, racism is perceived of as an American invention, despite the fact that Denmark transported the enslaved to the New World. There is simply no language in the Danish national self-understanding to account for the violent history and racism in the present context as a product of the time of slavery.

In her visual essay “Monuments that Won’t Fall,” artist La Vaughn Belle mentions how she experiences a sensation of “temporal collapse” between the time of slavery and the Black Lives Matter protests during 2020.³⁸ I want to suggest that reparative practice and rematerialization in the archives give rise to experiences of both temporal collapses, of contrapuntal experiences of time, where time is experienced as overlapping or collapsing. In response to such experiences, Françoise Vergès argues that in relation to coloniality, we need a “temporality of repair”: we are repairing the past, which is not yet repaired, but as we do so the present is itself being broken. This means that we must constantly engage in processes of repair that do not return a fully recovered body but acknowledge and bear witness to that body’s wounds.³⁹

FAST FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE, ANOTHER CROSSROAD⁴⁰

Frederiksberg Have, 1857.

Is this Frederiksberg Garden?

Or a trompe l’oeil? (a painterly effect to create shallow depth in painting, as seen in the Mona Lisa.)

A trompe l’oeil imagined again from Kgs. Nytorv no. 1,

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts?

The close-up is from the painting:

Justina Antoine, painted by Wilhelm Marstrand in 1857:

It was a talk by Dr. Temi Odumosu, “Who is the Subject,” that first brought the painting to my attention.⁴¹ Throughout Odumosu’s talk I couldn’t help being haunted by one thing:

Justina Antoine looks at me from the archive,

her eyes haunt me.

Her golden earring pierces me.

She is allowed to wear lace and jewelry, something that to my humble knowledge the Afro-Caribbean women in the Danish West Indies were not allowed to, since that would raise too much attention from the white male planters.⁴²

The earring, I imagine, is in lineage to the tradition of Crucian gold and jewelry, celebrated in the Virgin Islands. It reminds me of another pair of earrings, the earrings of Axeline Solomon, Mary Thomsen, Susanna Abrahamson, and Mathilda McBean, which they all brought with them to Denmark, as one of their sole possessions when they were incarcerated in Denmark, after the Fireburn labor rebellion of 1878.⁴³ The Virgin Islands Studies Collective: Dr. Tami Navarro, artist La Vaughn Belle, Dr. Hadiya



Wilhelm Marstrand, 1857: *Portræt af Otto Marstrands to døtre og deres vestindiske barnepige, Justina Antoine, i Frederiksberg Have*, (Portrait of Otto Marstrand's two daughters and their West Indian nurse Justina Antoine in Frederiksberg Garden) 89 x 67 cm, oil on canvas, SMK: Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen. <https://open.smk.dk/artwork/image/KMS8833>

Sewer, and Professor Tiphonie Yanique have worked extensively on this.⁴⁴

The painting is dated 1857— nine years after Emancipation (1848), and approximately twenty years before the Fireburn took place (1878).

Justina could be a contemporary of the Fireburn Queens, she too could have been their sister, their relative, or maybe she even knew them.

No known photographs of the Fireburn Queens exist in the archives, despite the fact that they came to Denmark at a time when photography, including prison photography, was fully developed. In the US Virgin Islands, people have the oral histories; Denmark has the prison records. The prison records state that they all brought earrings.

The lack of images might also attest to the fact that some subjects were made available for portraiture—while other subjects were banished or stored away—in the hope that they would be forgotten. But there is more to it than this.

The portrait of Justina was painted in 1857 by the Danish painter Wilhelm Marstrand.

Justina Antoine, we learn, was the “nanny” of Wilhelm’s brother Otto Marstrand’s children. Otto was a timber merchant, fire major and consul in St. Thomas.⁴⁵

Who is Justina looking at in this image?

Is she looking at Wilhelm Marstrand, painting her?

Was she asked if she wanted to have her portrait painted?

Was she asked to sit for him?—not in Frederiksberg Garden, where we believe the painting is located, but at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, where Wilhelm Marstrand was a professor, and where he was also the director in 1857, when the painting was painted.

Was she asked to sit still, not to move?

There is something uncanny about the light and shadows, suggesting that this is studio light, in his professor apartment or studio.⁴⁶

TENSE GRAMMAR

In Tina Campt’s compelling book *Listening to Images*⁴⁷ she invites the reader to listen to the lower frequencies of archival images, by juxtaposing archival images of Africans, Black people, and people of African descent in the diaspora, to attune to other stories than what the official narratives might recount. In her

reading of an ethnographic collection of a Trappist mission in South Africa and a series of portraits of women, Camppt reads their silent stillness as a stasis, described, quoting Darieck Scott, as a “reservoir of resistance to the colonizer’s acts of subjugation and enslavement.”⁴⁸

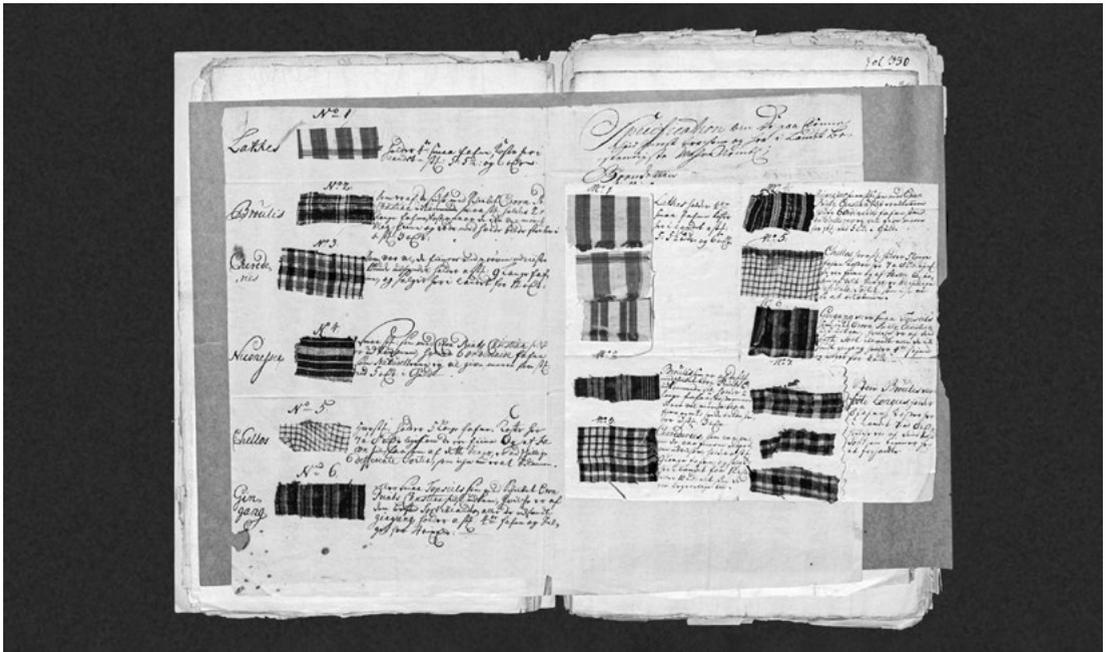
These photos visualize a similarly tense set of relations. Taut skin stretched over engaged musculature, tightly pursed lips, a horizontal indentation between cheekbone and jaw—these are not poses or expressions of relaxation, comfort, or ease. The tensions imaged in these portraits denote a state of being and becoming I describe with a different vocabulary. I call it “stasis.” What changes in our apprehension of these women’s images and their communities more broadly, when we move beyond stillness and immobility and engage them through the lens of stasis?⁴⁹

In Camppt’s definition of “stasis” it becomes “1. tensions produced by holding a complex set of forces in suspension; and 2. Invisible motion held in tense suspension or temporary equilibrium; e.g., vibration.”⁵⁰

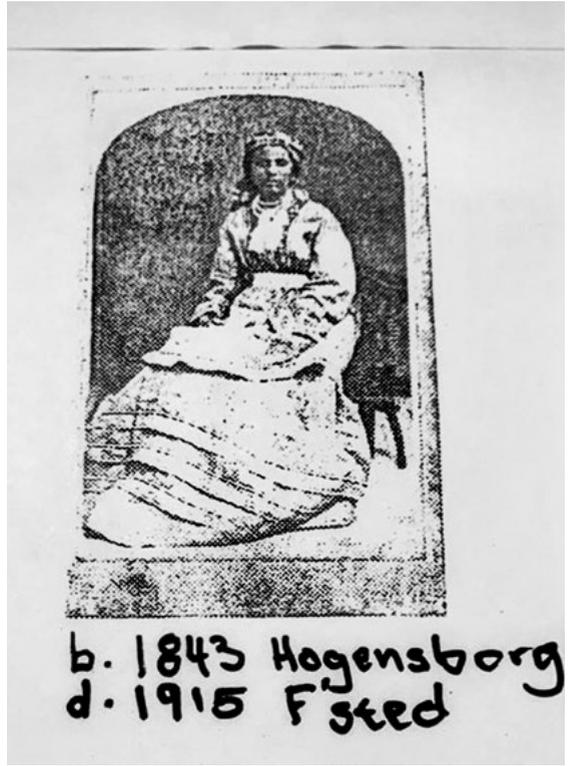
Returning to the painting of Justina Antoine, her appearance comes to hold back a complex set of forces in suspension; invisible motion held in tense suspension that vexes between possible threats of racial-sexual violence that Afro-Caribbean women were subjected to and being pulled in different directions by the white children, surrounding her in the painting—for whom she labors.

That tense grammar extends its atmosphere into the archive, into the point in the future from where I am looking at the painting now. Involuntarily my gaze and my reading continue to inflict that violence in the present. But it also extends into another discomfort. A culture of silence that has been cultivated within the Art Academy for centuries: racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, harassment, and other forms of oppression.

But the tense grammar also offers other lines of flight, of possible escape routes, that might hint at other possible connections, friendships, and bonds. I use the earring as a reparative temporal knot that collapse tenses and geographies. The earring becomes a time traveling vessel connecting past, present, and future.⁵¹



Katrine Dirckinck-Holmfeld, 2017: Still from the video *Christmas Report and Other Fragments*: Textile samples ordered by the Danish-Guinean Company on the Gold Coast in Ghana. The order was sent to Copenhagen and then sent to the Danish colony in Tranquebar, today Tharangambadi, India, where the textiles were produced. The textiles were sent to Ghana where they were traded for enslaved Africans, minerals, and other goods. Source: The Danish National Archives, Dansk-Guinesisk Kompagni, "Vestindisk-Guineisk Kompagni, Direktionen Breve og Dokumenter fra Guinea: 390/589" Breve fra Direktionen 1705-1722, 390.



Chalana Brown, 2021: Collage: juxtaposition of archival image of her great great aunt Mary Elisabeth Pratorius (born on Estate Hogensborg in 1843, dead 1915 in Frederiksted) with self-portrait. *E3: Exploration, Evolution, Effectuate: Exploring the evolution of Virgin Islands identity thru history, fashion, photography and fabric.*

[ZOOM IN]: CLOSE UP OF THE IMAGE OF HER HEAD TIE

[TIGNON]: MADRAS FABRIC

Justina Antoine's head tie is made of Madras fabric. The first image I encounter in the archive was an image of snippets of Indian textiles, "Latkes"—textile samples that were sent from the Danish Gold Coast to Denmark, to order in more of these fabrics from India. The fabrics were produced in the Danish trading posts in India: Tranquebar (today Tharangambadi) and Frederiksgonore (Serampore), shipped to Copenhagen and then to Ghana where the textiles were traded for enslaved people, minerals, and other goods. Hereafter the textiles were shipped to the West Indies, where they became part of the local fabric. The snippets of textiles digitized into a TIF in 300 dpi and stored under the category "*Vestindisk-Guineisik Kompagni, Direktionen Breve og Dokumenter fra Guinea: 390/589*" Breve fra Direktionen 1705–1722, 390, similar to the bricks in the Charlottenborg Castle, can be seen as material witnesses that enfold the routes in their texture. And as a maggi-cube-like movement they are both able to unravel the violent histories that they carry while at the same time they draw new intimate connections across time and geography: Visual artist, Chalana Brown, based in the Virgin Islands, is working extensively to reclaim and refashion the Madras fabric.⁵²

In her ongoing project E3: Exploration, Evolution, Effectuate, Brown writes on Facebook:

21st Century ostentatiousness of black body. #Tignon, #headwraps, #usvirginislands, #myusvi. Extract.

In 1786, a colonial Governor, pronounced the Bando de buen gobierno (Edict of good government). He expressed particular concern with the role of free people of African descent in the colonies. Article Six of the edict included a series of sumptuary guidelines that discursively prohibited both free and enslaved women of African descent—*nègre* and *cuarterón* (Black and quadroon)—from adorning themselves and their hair.

The tignon, which was supposed to be plain, inconspicuous and reminiscent of the utilitarian head coverings of enslaved plantation workers, was made luxurious, vibrant, and fashionable through the use of finely-printed and brightly-colored Madras cotton, elaborate ties, and other added accessories. Even wealthy white women began to appropriate the tignon as a fashionable piece of dress.



Dorothy Akpene Amenuke, 2012: *How Far How Near*, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

The post attests to how people were able to find subversive practices of self-stylization, against all odds to resist the discourse of the colonizer by making speech and fashion that resist by rendering its forms opaque to the governing law and language of the colonizer. But the textile fragments also draw connections between artistic practices between India, West Africa, and the Caribbean that shows an entanglement of practices by artists even though they might have been cut off from communicating together.

Another such work is the work of Dorothy Akpene Amenuke, based in Kumasi, Ghana. Amenuke works on fibers, textiles and related materials, and uncovers the history of the local African prints that today are being produced by big multinational companies and resold back to the African market as traditional “African prints.”⁵³ Despite the fact that the two textile practices might at first glance have very little in common, by juxtaposing them side by side, by weaving them together, they come to resonate intimacies across geographies and time zones that have been cut off from connection due to colonialism. Returning to Glissant’s *Poetics of Relations*, he writes “Opacities can coexist and converge, weaving fabrics. To understand these truly one must focus on the texture of the weave and not on the nature of its components. (...) This-here is the weave, and it weaves no boundaries. The right to opacity would not establish autism; it would be the real foundation of Relation, in freedoms.”⁵⁴

By juxtaposing practices that are not necessarily connected, by attuning to the scraps of information and “lower frequencies”⁵⁵ or “phonic substances”⁵⁶ in the colonial archive, in this essay I have suggested the way in which the colonial archive becomes an entanglement of “intimacies of different continents”⁵⁷ sustained by the colonial project. These intimacies testify to the vital role of infrastructures for the colonial enterprise, through which routes, journeys, exchanges, and encounters were made possible. The colonial archive can be read as an entanglement between all these different routes and lines of flight, but also as a technology for disentangling and destituting the cultural practices and creative expressions of the colonial subjects. Despite that, and against all odds, some practices have survived, transformed, and are gaining new meanings.



↑
Obverse, 1792 Danish "Abolition of the Slave Trade" Medal, Die Cutter: Pietro Leonardo Gianelli,
design: Nicolai Abildgaard Denmark, 1792, bronze, accession #2017-338, image #D2017-JBC-0926-0011

↗
Reverse, 1792 Danish "Abolition of the Slave Trade" Medal, Die Cutter: Pietro Leonardo Gianelli,
design: Nicolai Abildgaard, Denmark, 1792, bronze, accession #2017-338, image #D2017-JBC-0926-0012



Image credits: *The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Museum Purchase, Lasser Numismatics Fund; and Partial Gift, John Kraljevich* <https://emuseum.history.org/objects/103611/1792--danish-abolition-of-the-slave-trade-medal>

EPILOGUE: NOTES FOR AN ABOLITIONIST ART EDUCATION

“We ask, are prisons and universities two sides of the same coin?”⁵⁸

How to abolish the Academy, or, how to be abolished by the Academy? Or better, how to fathom an anti-colonial, abolitionist art pedagogy?

The Art Academy is also harboring other stories, other material artefacts that can attest to a different narrative that might challenge the white, hetero-patriarchal form:

While scrolling over my newsfeed on Facebook, I encountered the image of an abolitionist coin purchased by the Colonial Williamsburg Museum in 2018. The coin was designed in 1792 by the Danish artist Nicolai Abildgaard for the occasion of the “Edict of the Abolition of the Slave Trade” by Ernst Schimmelmann / Prince Frederik VI. It has been a myth within a Danish self-understanding that this edict made Denmark the first European nation to ban the trade of enslaved people, for ships serving under Danish flags.⁵⁹ The decree was made with a ten-year clause so that it would not take effect until 1802. In that ten-year period, the number of enslaved Africans shipped to the Danish West Indies increased drastically, with the purpose to procure enough enslaved people for the plantations to become “self-sufficient.”⁶⁰ As it has been widely studied in the Caribbean, once the legal enslavement trade from Africa was discontinued, the “enslaved women’s reproductive capabilities became pivotal for slavery and the plantation economy’s survival.”⁶¹

Abildgaard was a professor at the Art Academy from around 1778 and the director from 1789–1791, and the professor of the renowned sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen. It is said that the bronze coin was cast by Pietro Leonardo Gianelli, who was also a member of the Academy and a friend of Thorvaldsen.⁶² The coin is celebrated by the museum curator: “Not only does it beautifully and sensitively display the portrait of an African man, it also marks the beginnings of the abolitionist movement in Europe.”⁶³ In another article, it is “believed to be the oldest Danish portrait of an African.”⁶⁴ Even though it might be abolitionist it can still be seen as a racialized depiction, continuing to produce the epistemic-aesthetic violence in the archive, despite the fact that its intentions might have been otherwise: A person of African descent is portrayed with enlarged lips, slightly underhung jaw, enlarged

throat gland, all of these traits can be seen in a lineage of mythologized and racialized depictions of Black people, followed by the inscription of the Latin phrase “*Me Miserum*” (“Woe is me” or “Poor me”). On the other side of the coin, is the goddess of Nemesis depicted touching her own wings, as the avenging goddess of divine indignation against, and retribution for evil deeds and undeserved good fortune.

As Marisa Fuentes’ book *Dispossessed Lives* testifies to, in the Privy Council report during the same time in the United Kingdom (late 1780s) abolitionist campaign, enslaved women and men were excluded from recounting “their own violations except through the voices and interpretations of various classes of white men. The archival silence effectively mutes the very subjects of this inquiry and profoundly suppresses enslaved subjectivity, not only in the movement of its creation but also the discourses of racialized gender in these debates...”⁶⁵ In a similar manner, is it possible to view the subject, stuck in a silver coin, as arrested by the archive, followed by the inscription that accounts for his suffering on behalf of him? I have not been able to attend to that subject and find out who the sitter is, but the image draws similarities to another of Abildgaard’s paintings, painted ten years later (around the same time that the bill to abolish the slave trade was finally effectuated): “Simo betror sin frigivne Sosia sine bekymringer over sin søns forhold til pigen fra Andros. 1803” (Simo confides in his freed enslaved Sosia his concerns over his son’s relationship with the girl from Andros). Here again, the supposedly freed enslaved Sosia is represented with stereotypical features. Abildgaard’s two depictions share striking similarities to Joshiah Wedgewood’s famous anti-slavery medallion of a chained slave on bended knee, begging “Am I not a man and a brother?” As Hartman shows, that “bid for emancipation reproduced the abject position of the slave.”⁶⁶

In a similar fashion, Abildgaard’s coin does not paint a one-sided picture of abolition, and in Denmark the abolition of the slave trade could also be seen as a calculating speculation to create a more efficient flow in the supply chain.⁶⁷ In their article and seminar of the same name “Abolitionist University Studies: an Invitation”⁶⁸ *Abigail Boggs, Eli Meyerhoff, Nick Mitchell, and Zach Schwartz-Weinstein* ask how prisons and universities are two sides of the same coin, and a lineage of slavery and racial-capitalism, and that abolition itself is a “terrain of struggle”: “In the

anti-slavery movement, some abolitionists sought full freedom and equality for all Black people, while others perpetuated anti-black racism.”⁶⁹ Yet, if we accept their invitation towards “abolitionist university studies,” or in our case an art education as a reparative project in situations “beyond repair,” what would the abolitionist Art Academy that could have been but never was, following the coin of Abildgaard, entail?

What would an abolitionist Art Academy look like in a Danish/Nordic context? What kinds of reparative infrastructures could emerge out of current social and political struggles that the racial-capitalist society continues to produce: the refugee camp and the deportation camps; the so-called “ghetto-law”⁷⁰; the continuous racism and discrimination within the learning institutions; the concrete demands for decolonization, sovereignty, and land repatriation in Sápmi and Kalaallit Nunaat; the calls for reparations including scholarships, stipends, and work grants for students and artists from former colonies? An aesthetic and discursive abolition that would entail “unlearning” the discursive and aesthetic ramifications of coloniality today, creating new social and artistic communities and infrastructures that cut across disciplinary, geographical, and privileged boundaries, and “where more and different bodies can thrive and dwell.”⁷¹ Following Moten and Harney, the “abolitionist university” would be “where the generation of knowledge in the university—at the level of its form, content and practices—tends towards the knowing degeneration, disorganization and disequilibrium of the university.”⁷²

These were some of the questions that the course “Min(d)ing the Academy” as well as the larger research project “Entangled Archives” were grappling with; however, as the events unfolded, it also clearly showed that the “degeneration, disorganization and disequilibrium” or in our case rematerialization of the knowledges upheld by the monolithic overseer of colonial visibility, comes with a price and that there is still a critique that the art institution cannot bear or appropriate.

Meanwhile may all the Christian Hansen Ernsts, Justina Antoinettes, unnamed enslaved, Sosias, and other colonized subjects who had their presence in Charlottenborg Castle and the Art Academy rest in peace. And may we continue to find guidance and inspiration in their continuous presence as well as collective practices that have also emerged out of the Art Academy and continue to push for

another anti-racist, anti-colonial, queer-feminist, art education: The painter Lili Elbe, one of the first women in history to undergo sex reassignment surgery, and her partner the painter Gerda Gottlieb, both students at The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts⁷³; the “1944-group”, a student group consisting of Helle Monies & Ib Mogens Bech Christensen (and others), who fought against the German occupation during WWII;⁷⁴ Pia Arke, an artist, writer, and photographer, whose artistic research practice continues to inspire decolonial thinking and challenges the relations between Kalaallit Nunaat and Denmark; and Julie Edel Hardenberg, whose works continues to problematize the unequal power structures that exist between Kalaallit Nunaat and Denmark; “at invitere hende at invitere”, a queer/lesbian group that shed light on the conditions of lesbian, queer and non-binary artists historically within the Art Academy for the occasion Kvindejubil96um, a Women’s* anniversary organized as a counter-event to the Art Academy’s official 250th anniversary in 2004 to mark that women only had access to the Art Academy in the last 96 years; UNIDENTIFIED FOREIGN OBJECT LABORATORY (UFOLab), an inter-Scandinavian artist group exploring Transnational Adoption consisting of Anna Jin Hwa Borstam, Jane Jin Kaisen, Jette Hye Jin Mortensen, and Trine Mee Sook Glerup; FCNN: Feminist Collective with No Name consisting of filmmaker and artist Anita Beikpour and artist Dina El Kaisy Freimuth; I AM QUEEN MARY by artists La Vaughn Belle & Jeannette Ehlers; Hvid[me] Archive created by the artists Annarosa Krøyer Holm & Miriam Haile; Forgotten Friends: A Grey, or Maybe Purple Safari, a performative Safari experience performed with and by Signe Koefoed, Balz Isler, Jai Raphael, Cassie Augusta Jørgensen & Justin F. Kennedy; Marronage, a decolonial, feminist collective, who have taught numerous workshops at the Art Academy; Anonymous Artists; School of Re-membering; Bridge Radio, as well as many others, whose presence, stories, and struggles have been written out of the archive.

The questions that the abolitionist Art Academy must ask:

Who counts as a painting?

And who counts as a subject?

Who is left to drown at the bottom of the sea?

What is being dredged up to be restored

- or cast anew?

- 1 This essay was first presented as a talk at Aarhus Kunsthall as part of Aarhus Art Week, fall 2020, organized by Kunsten.nu and as a lecture at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, fall 2020. Since then, I have presented it at numerous conferences and artist talks. I am grateful for the feedback and comments on the manuscript I have received from students, peers, colleagues, and collaborators. I especially want to thank Anonymous Artists, School of Re-membering and the students who participated in my course “Min(d)ing the Academy” for their insights and for pushing the conceptual and theoretical framework in praxis. I would like to thank the staff at the museum Eidsvoll 1814 in Norway for their very kind help and providing information about the double portrait of Ernst & Gyldenløve; Chalan Brown and Dorothy Akpene Amente for allowing me to publish their artistic work, which has been an immense inspiration to this project. Finally, I extend my gratitude to museum and library staff at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation for their kind help in providing access and publishing rights for the Abolitionist coin.
- 2 Denmark-Norway was one kingdom from 1523–33 & 1537–1814
- 3 Anonymous Artists, “DET KGL. DANSKE KUNSTAKADEMIS GRUNDLÆGGER SMIDT I HAVNEN – I DO ART,” *IDOART.DK*, 2020, <https://www.idoart.dk/blog/det-kgl-danske-kunstakademis-grundlaegger-smidt-i-havnen>.
- 4 Saidiya Hartman, “Venus in Two Acts,” *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*, no. 26 (2008): 1–14.
- 5 Susan Schuppli, *Material Witness: Forensic Media & the Production of Evidence* (MIT Press, 2016).
- 6 Wekker Gloria, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822374565>.
- 7 Michel Foucault, “The Historical A Priori and The Archive,” in *Archeology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2002), 26–30.
- 8 Ariella Aisha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (Brooklyn & London: Verso Books, 2019); Bénédicte Savoy and Felwine Sarr, “The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage. Toward a New Relational Ethics,” 2018, 252.
- 9 I am deliberately confusing the “who,” in who counts as a painting, which if it was to be grammatically correct should have been “what counts as a painting” or “who counts as a subject for portraiture,” to show how epistemic and aesthetic regimes overlap with ontological ones co-determining who counts as subjects worth protecting in society. The question is of course echoing Judith Butler’s essay “What Is Critique? An Essay on Foucault’s Virtue,” in *The Judith Butler Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 304–22. I continue to touch upon this question in the reading of the portrait of Justina Antoine and the missing photographs/portraits of the Fireburn Queens.
- 10 My practice as an artist, researcher and educator has centred around developing a practice-led framework for “reparative critical practices,” drawing on the work of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (2003). In my adaptation of Sedgwick’s notion of the reparative reading, I move away from, in my view, a common misconception of a dichotomy between the paranoid position and the reparative position, by emphasising or enacting a form of “para-paranoia.” I suggest that the reparative practitioner is no less paranoid than its paranoid sisters but enacts an over-determination with paranoia and “cruel objects” which enables the subject to style reparative practices by assembling fragments from a culture, whose avowed desire has not been to sustain the subject. I argue that reparative critical practices style new forms of subjectivity through a complex engagement with affect, materiality, and time. I use the adjective “reparative”, rather than the noun “repair”, in order to insist that these are ongoing practices that we are never done with and that the aim is not to restore something to its previous form or to provide closure.
- 11 This proposal was the driver of *Archives that Matter*, a conference, workshop, and special issue that grappled with the politics of mass digitization of the Danish colonial archives. The project entailed fostering collaborations and novel interventions in the archive between artists and scholars from USVI, Ghana, US and Europe. We conceived of the notion of reparative practice, as tied to psychic, poetic, and creative dimensions, as the possibility of telling a different story, and the imaginative potential of this retelling for the acknowledgement of unrighted wrongs. Rather than signalling a temporal closure or a finite gesture, the reparative practice is a constant process of becoming. We thus emphasise the “reparative practice” as the processual, transformative and quotidian labour of repairing the past through creative engagement with the material remnants of colonial history. A work we will never be over and done with, but which requires of us to build small worlds or infrastructures of sustenance that cultivate a different present and future.
- 12 Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2010).
- 13 Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 189–90.
- 14 Noise here is understood with Fred Moten’s reading of Édouard Glissant, as he cites: “Noise is essential to speech. Din is discourse... Since speech was forbidden, slaves camouflaged the word under the provocative intensity of the scream. It was taken to be nothing but the call of a wild animal. This is how the dispossessed man organized his speech by weaving it into the apparently meaningless texture of extreme noise.” Fred Moten, *In The Break: The Aesthetics Of The Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 7.
- 15 Butler, “What Is Critique? An Essay on Foucault’s Virtue”; Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London; New York: Verso, 2010).
- 16 Kara Keeling, *Queer Times, Black Futures* (New York: NYU Press, 2019).
- 17 Katrine Dirckinck-Holmfeld, “Reparative,” in *Uncertain Archives: Critical Keywords for Big Data*, ed. Nanna Bonde Thylstrup et al., 2021, <http://public.eblib.com/choice/PublicFullRecord.aspx?p=6454638>.

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- 18 Jeannette Allis Bastian, *Owning Memory: How a Caribbean Community Lost Its Archives and Found Its History* (Libraries Unlimited, 2003).
- 19 Sindre Omenås, "Skiltet har hengt på veggen i 10 år. Nå vekker det sterke reaksjoner," *Varden*, July 29, 2015, <https://www.varden.no/nyheter/skiltet-har-hengt-pa-veggen-i-10-ar-na-vekker-det-sterke-reaksjoner/>.
- 20 Assistant Professor Amalie Skovmøller, University of Copenhagen has compiled a list that currently counts 25 replicas of the bust in Danish museums, institutions, and private collections.
- 21 "Er kunstaktivisternes historiske udsagn »rent vrøvl«?," *Politiken Historie*, November 19, 2020, [Politiken Historie, March 31, 2021, <https://politikenhistorie.dk/art8154273/Forbindelserne-mellem-slaveri-og-velstand-i-Danmark-var-ikke-s%C3%A5-direkte-som-de-ser-ud>.](https://politikenhistorie.dk/nyhedsbrev/politikenhistorie_nyhedsbrev/art8002269/Er-kunstaktivisternes-historiske-udsagn-%C2%BBrent-vr%C3%B8vl-%C2%AB; Ulla Kjær,)
- 22 I am grateful to conversations that I have had with artist Julie Edel Hardenberg and Svend Hardenberg following the events.
- 23 Wekker Gloria, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822374565>.
- 24 In Denmark the transatlantic slave trade has often been referred to as a "triangular trade." The triangular trade describes a triangle between Denmark, the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana) and the Danish West Indies, with an emphasis on the colonizers' perspective where enslaved bodies were listed as cargo and goods. As such, the triangular model is insufficient in that it does not account for the human suffering of the enslaved. In addition, it was not only a triangle but a matrix-like trade that involved merchant networks spanning not only the Atlantic but also the Indian Ocean and the North Atlantic. See also Sean Kelley, "Transatlantic slave trade was not entirely 'triangular' – countries in the Americas sent ships out too" accessed October 4, 2021, <http://theconversation.com/transatlantic-slave-trade-was-not-entirely-triangular-countries-in-the-americas-sent-ships-out-too-97115>.
- 25 Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 5, <http://site.ebrary.com/id/11071023>.
- 26 Gurminder K. Bhambra, Dalia Gebrial, and Kerem Nisancioglu, *Decolonising the University* (London: Pluto Press, 2018), [Under Representation: The Racial Regime of Aesthetics, 1st edition \(New York: Fordham University Press, 2018\).](https://www.plutobooks.com/9780745338200/decolonising-the-university; Azoulay, <i>Potential history</i>; David Lloyd, <i>Under Representation: The Racial Regime of Aesthetics</i>, 1st edition (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018).</p>
<p>27 Schuppli, <i>Material Witness: Forensic Media & the Production of Evidence</i>, 3.</p>
<p>28 Sedgwick, <i>Touching Feeling</i>.</p>
<p>29 Gurminder K. Bhambra, Dalia Gebrial, and Kerem Nisancioglu, <i>Decolonising the University</i> (London: Pluto Press, 2018), <a href=)
- 30 Until this date the companies had been owned by private shareholders, among others Moltke, who was also the president of both companies for a period.
- 31 1523 Iceland; 1620 Trankebar | *Tharangambadi*; 1657 Fort Christiansborg, Accra | *Osu Castle*; 1672 St. Thomas; 1718 St. Jan | *St. John*; 1721 Greenland; 1733 St. Croix; 1755 Frederiksnagore | *Serampur*. It is important to mention that St. Croix is by far the biggest island, and the one that was the most suitable for the production of sugar. Many of the plantations were subdivided and leased, or sold to private investors/ planters, but some of the plantations were also directly under the king. See Tyson, *The Involvement of the Danish Monarchy in the Slave Trade and Slavery in the Danish West Indies* (St. Croix, V.I., 2017), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEylsvZu8d8>.
- 32 This hypothesis is of course not mine alone and I am indebted to my joint work with artist, curator and critic Mathias Kryger for our initial research into this matter.
- 33 See among others "Moltke's Palace," in *Wikipedia*, September 4, 2021, and "Schimmelmänn's *Palacia*," https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Heinrich_Carl_Schimmelmänn_1773.jpg; "Amalienborg," in *Wikipedia*, August 13, 2021, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Amalienborg&oldid=1038566183>. incl. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Moltke%27s_Palace&oldid=1042385034; Lorenz Lönnberg, *English: Portrait of Heinrich Carl Schimmelmänn with the Portrait of His Wife Caroline Tugendreich with an African Slave Boy*, circa 1773, painting, circa 1773, The Museum of National History.
- 34 Denise Ferreira da Silva, "Hacking the Subject: Black Feminism and Refusal beyond the Limits of Critique," *PhiloSPHIA. A Journal of Continental Feminism* 8, no. 1 winter (2018): 19–41.
- 35 Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
- 36 La Vaughn Belle, "Monuments That Won't Fall," in *Heksejagt / Witch Hunt*, ed. Alison Karasyk and Jeppe Ugelvig (Copenhagen: Billedkunstskolernes Forlag, 2020).
- 37 Elizabeth Löwe Hunter, "Danmark, Du Knuser Mit Hjerte," *Medium* (blog), July 10, 2020, <https://medium.com/@elizabethlowehunter/danmark-du-knuser-mit-hjerte-75f9ee4eef7a>.
- 38 Belle, "Monuments That Won't Fall."
- 39 Françoise Vergès, "Memories of Struggles and Visual/ Sonic Archives," paper presented at the symposium "Archival Encounters: Colonial Archives, Care and Social Justice", with Françoise Vergès, Kaiama L. Glover and Tami Navarro, University of Copenhagen, May 2019.
- 40 This sentence is a direct reference to Black Audio Film Collective's seminal work: *The Last Angel of History* by Akomfrah, Black Audio Film Collective, and Gopaul.
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- 41 I am indebted to art historian Dr. Temi Odumosu and PhD fellow Nina Cramer who have worked extensively on this image of Justina Antoine.
- 42 La Vaughn Belle et al., "Ancestral Queendom in the Virgin Islands: Reflections on the Prison Records of the Four Rebel Queens of the 1878 Fireburn in St. Croix, Danish West Indies (US Virgin Islands)," ed. Daniela Agostinho, Katrine Dirckinck-Holmfeld, and Karen Louise Søilen, *Archives That Matter: Infrastructures for Sharing Unshared Histories in Colonial Archives* NTIK: Nordisk Tidsskrift for Informationsvidenskab og Kulturformidling (2019).
- 43 The St. Croix Fireburn labor rebellion was the largest labor rebellion in the overseas history of the Danish Empire. In 1848 slavery was officially abolished but the workers continued to work under horrible conditions: The pay was low, mobility was restricted, and conditions were harsh. On October 1, 1878, the plantation workers on St. Croix rebelled and burned down many plantations. The rebellion was brutally suppressed, many of the men who participated were gunned down. The four Fireburn Queens were sentenced to death and sent to prison in Christianshavn, Denmark, miles away from their families and children. They were pardoned after 10 years and returned to the islands. See also fireburnfiles.dk, accessed September 9, 2021, <https://fireburnfiles.dk/index.html>; Belle et al., "Ancestral Queendom in the Virgin Islands: Reflections on the Prison Records of the Four Rebel Queens of the 1878 Fireburn in St. Croix, Danish West Indies (US Virgin Islands)"; Jeannette Ehlers and La Vaughn Belle, "I Am Queen Mary," 2018, <https://www.iamqueenmary.com>.
- 44 Belle et al., "Ancestral Queendom in the Virgin Islands: Reflections on the Prison Records of the Four Rebel Queens of the 1878 Fireburn in St. Croix, Danish West Indies (US Virgin Islands)."
- 45 "Marstrands atypiske familieportræt - Bruun Rasmussen Kunstauktioner," accessed September 9, 2021, https://bruun-rasmussen.dk/m/news/170515_3.html.
- 46 At the time of Marstrand it was common that professors lived and had their apartment and studio in the Charlottenborg Castle.
- 47 Tina Campt, *Listening to Images* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017).
- 48 Campt, 50.
- 49 Campt, 58.
- 50 Campt, 51.
- 51 While presenting this paper at Aalto University, 2021 one of the participants drew a striking parallel between the earring and a controversial law enabling Danish authorities to confiscate valuable items from refugees, known as "smykkeloven", the 'jewelry law'. The law can be seen within a lineage of sartorial laws and practices that continue to govern the lives of Black and Brown people today. See also the work of Ayana Omilade Flewellen, "African Diasporic Choices: Locating the Lived Experiences of Afro-Crucians in the Archival and Archaeological Record," *Archives That Matter: Infrastructures for Sharing Unshared Histories in Colonial Archives*, 2019.
- 52 Nina Cramer, "Carving Out Spaces of Possibility. An Interview with Ayana Omilade Flewellen," *Periskop - Forum for kunsthistorisk debat*, no. 25 (August 24, 2021): 46-59.
- 53 Dorothy Akpene Amenuke, "BEING CONTENT (?): CONTAINMENT, HABITATION AND DEVOTION," *Nordisk Tidsskrift for Informationsvidenskab Og Kulturformidling* 8, no. 2 (December 2, 2019): 75-83, <https://doi.org/10.7146/ntik.v7i2.118482>.
- 54 Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 190.
- 55 Campt, *Listening to Images*.
- 56 Moten, *In The Break: The Aesthetics Of The Black Radical Tradition*.
- 57 Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*.
- 58 Abigail Boggs et al., "Abolitionsit University Studies: An Invitation," *Abolition.University* (blog), 2019, https://abolition.university/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/abolitionist-University-Studies_-_An-Invitation-Release-1-version.pdf?3665c2&3665c2.
- 59 Helle Jørgensen, "MYTE: Var Danmark det første land, der ophævede slaveriet?," 2014, <https://danmarkshistorien.dk/leksikon-og-kilder/vis/materiale/myte-var-danmark-det-foerste-land-der-ophaevede-slaveriet/>.
- 60 Jørgensen.
- 61 Sasha Turner, "Home-Grown Slaves: Women, Reproduction, and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, Jamaica 1788-1807," *Journal of Women's History* 23, no. 3 (2011): 39, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jowh.2011.0029>; Marisa J. Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).
- 62 "Peter Leonhard Gianelli - The Thorvaldsens Museum Archives," accessed September 7, 2021, <https://arkivet.thorvaldsensmuseum.dk/people/peter-leonhard-gianelli>.
- 63 ArtfixDaily, "Extremely Rare Danish Abolitionist Medal Acquired by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation," *ArtfixDaily*, 2018, <https://www.artfixdaily.com/artwire/release/993-extremely-rare-danish-abolitionist-medal-acquired-by-the-colonial->.
- 64 Andrew Harris, "Colonial Williamsburg Adds Rare Abolitionist Coin to Collection," *Williamsburg Yorktown Daily* (blog), January 11, 2018, <https://wydaily.com/story/2018/01/11/colonial-williamsburg-adds-rare-abolitionist-coin-to-collection-nws/>.
- 65 Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*, 129.
- 66 Saidiya V. Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route*, 1. paperback edition (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2008), 167.
- 67 Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *All Incomplete*, ed. Zun Lee (Colchester New York Port Watson: Minor Compositions, 2021).
- 68 Boggs et al., "Abolitionist University Studies: An Invitation."
- 69 Boggs et al., 1.
- 70 "Denmark has listed its non-profit public housing neighborhoods on a so-called 'Ghetto-List.' Making it onto the list based on criteria that registers education, job, income, crime rate and ethnicity. With a specific
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focus on the tenant percentage of “other ethnic, non-western immigrants and their descendants.” Aysha Amin, “The Funambulist Correspondents 10 /// Aarhus: A Testimony to Our Self-Determination,” THE FUNAMBULIST MAGAZINE, May 14, 2021, <https://thefunambulist.net/editorials/the-funambulist-correspondents-10-aarhus-a-testimony-to-our-self-determination>.

- 71 Brown Island, “Floating in the White Sea - A Foray into the Contemporary Art Insitution,” Konstfack (Stockholm, 2018), 40–56, <https://www.konstfack.se/PageFiles/51394/Brown%20Island%20-%20Floating%20in%20the%20White%20Sea.pdf>.
- 72 Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, “The University: Last Words,” Are.na, July 9, 2020, <https://www.are.na/block/7951400>.
- 73 See also Cassie Augusta Jørgensen, who has worked extensively on the story of Elbe for her piece at the Degree Show 2022, Kunsthall Charlottenborg https://kunsthallcharlottenborg.dk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/KC_Afgang2022_Guide.pdf
- 74 Niels Østergaard Munk has worked extensively on the resistance group “1944”: Helle Monies & Ib Mogens Bech Christensen, who were both students at the Art Academy and fought against the German occupation 1940–1945. Ib was executed by German soldiers shortly before the liberation in 1945. See Niels Østergaard Munk, *Lige Efter Krigen Var Jeg Sikker På, at Jeg Kunne Finde Stedet*, 4 channel 16-mm film installation, 2021, <https://www.foraarsudstillingen.dk/en/event/screening-filmvaerk-niels-oestergaard-munk/>.