

After Post-Colonialism? (Invisible Culture 13, fall 2008)

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Call for Submissions

Deadline for Papers June 1, 2008

After Postcolonialism?

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This issue of Invisible Culture seeks to explore the limits and possibilities for post-colonial theoretical discourse as it relates to artistic and cultural practice. Art works, performances, films, videos, and other cultural production that engage with issues of global migration and the muddying of identity markers of race and class suggest the importance of doubt when considering history writing and fact-gathering. Performance artists The Yes Men fake their identities and take their practice outside of the gallery in an attempt to chip at the legitimacy of political structures such as the World Trade Organization. Visual artist Ken Lum offers a commentary on how one may understand visual markers of identity. Visual and performance artist Walid Ra'ad's works under the name The Atlas Group suggest the anxiety-producing task of stitching together history from material evidence. La Pocha Nostra's Chica Iranian Project investigates the political dimensions of visual misrecognition in post 9/11 United States.

These practices suggest the possibility for identity to be context- and site-specific, and to mobilize identity markers to critically examine practices of authorship, history writing, and institutional practices. But is identity truly mutable? Can we be in a post-post-colonial era where identity is understood to be contextually informed, partial, and provisional? And if so, what does this look like? Kwame Anthony Appiah argues for the unfixed cosmopolitan in his 2004 monograph *Cosmopolitanism*, a utopic figure which some critics have suggested

presents a re-framed flâneur, able to travel the globe freely with little consideration for the class and political restrictions that impede the movement of those less fortunate. Other writers and theorists have asserted that this is not a post-colonial era; that we are still dealing with colonialization's legacy, whether we call this period post- or neo-colonial. Yet others suggest that post-colonial theory still maintains its position as a vital field of examination when considering visual presentations of identity, providing important tools to critically analyze place, class, race, and practice. What is the place for art and globalization in this context? What possibilities and limitations do various forms of theorization (post-colonial, neo-colonial, Cosmopolitanism, or post-post-colonialism) offer to a consideration of artistic practice concerned with identity and place? What role does the gallery and the site play in this presentation?

We are particularly interested in papers that take into account the multi-faceted experiences of post-colonial thought. Possible methodological frameworks include: interdisciplinary visual culture, gendered experience, inquiries considering notions of class, and/or other streams that may contribute to a rich and nuanced inquiry into the state of post-colonial theory and practice. How is identity represented, performed, interrogated? How do these examinations tie in with post-colonial theoretical discussions? What are the boundaries of post-colonial discussions when dealing with contemporary artistic practice?

Possible topics include:

- Representations of identity in art, video, film, and/or performance which blur the boundaries between self and other;
- The future of post-colonial discourse and practice: current methodological challenges and how to proceed from here;
- Identity politics: dead or alive? Does cultural production involving a claim of identity or lack thereof continue to have political and aesthetic valence?
- Visible minority or visible stereotype? How does one represent an Othered group without calling up its stereotype? What are some alternate ways to address or perform racial identity? Or is race obsolete?
- The New Cosmopolitan: challenges and possibilities in the cultural sphere suggested by Kwame Anthony Appiah and others proposing a cosmopolitan rather than regional approach to ethical race relations;
- Whither whiteness studies? What role do studies of whiteness play into notions of post-colonialism, when racial identities are troubled? What are some methodological tools which whiteness studies

offers in a field post- post-colonialism?

- Post-colonialism or Neo-colonialism? Marxist theorists suggest that there has never been a move away from the colonial moment. What are the possibilities and challenges of both methodological premises, particularly in understanding cultural production?

- The museum and the minority. How far have museums come to address issues of equality fought for in since the 1960s? Guillermo Gomez-Peña pointed out in a 1995 essay "From Art-Mageddon to Gringostroika: A Manifesto Against Censorship" (published in *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* Ed. Suzanne Lacy. Seattle, WA: Bay Press), that equality may only be truly measured by the number of minorities who hold administrative positions. How has this wish been realized? Does this wish still hold true? Or does hiring based on minority standing in any form repeat practices of stereotyping?

Please send submissions of 2,500 - 5,000 words and a 500 word abstract to Cynthia Foo (foo.cynthia@gmail.com) AND Maia Dauner (mdauner@mail.rochester.edu) by June 1, 2008.

Reference:

CFP: After Post-Colonialism? (Invisible Culture 13, fall 2008). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 1, 2008 (accessed May 10, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/30375>>.