# Eco-Caribbean Visions in Art and Exhibition Practice (online, 4–29 Nov 21)

Online, Nov 4–29, 2021

Giulia Smith, Ruskin School of Art

Biotic Resistance: Eco-Caribbean Visions in Art and Exhibition Practice is an online research series devoted to exploring the intersection of art, literature, and environment in the transnational Caribbean. The event is jointly organised by Dr Giulia Smith and Dr Kate Keohane (Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford). A central objective is to highlight the role that artists and thinkers with Caribbean heritage have played in shaping a planetary consciousness that is uniquely suited to thinking through the ecological emergencies of the present.

Importantly, the series is not bound by chronological focus, but supports research that draws transhistorical connections between the colonial era, the period of independence and the contemporary. The climatic phenomena that currently make the Caribbean one of the most ecologically vulnerable regions in the world are inextricable from the history of this region as a site of colonial extraction and exploitation.

Starting in the fifteenth century, the European colonisation of the Caribbean initiated one of the most dramatic shifts in the ecological organisation of the planet, so much so that some have taken the conquest of the Americas to mark the beginning of the Anthropocene. Never before had the world witnessed such a monumental operation of transoceanic transplantation: soils, seeds, animals and humans were shipped to the Caribbean from every corner of the world; while the region's native resources were fed into an exponentially growing trade in tropical goods. Pivoting on the economy of the plantation, this violently exploitative traffic in both animate and inanimate commodities underpins the development of the phenomenon art historians call 'modernity' ('plantationocene' for Donna Haraway and others) and epitomises the centrality of the Caribbean in the formation of a globally connected market with irreversible anthropogenic effects on the planet.

Today, as the Caribbean remains at risk of devastating forms of neo-colonial resource extraction, growing numbers of artists and scholars are turning to the politics of ecology to advocate for the region's effective decolonisation as well as for more sustainable futures for the world at large. This vindication of the Caribbean as a frontline of planetary survival has prompted a reassessment of the work of historic authors and artists (from Sylvia Wynter to Édouard Glissant, from Aubrey Williams to Wifredo Lam and Everald Brown) who placed the natural world at the forefront of the struggle against colonialism. 'Biotic Resistance: Eco-Caribbean Visions in Art and Exhibition Practice' takes stock of these invaluable theoretical and activist engagements, and reflects upon their implications through a transdisciplinary approach to art history.

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TO REGISTER PLEASE VISIT: https://bioticresistance.squarespace.com/

PROGRAM

4th November 4-6pm GMT
Roots and Routes

4-4:10pm Introduction by Giulia Smith and Kate Keohane (Leverhulme Early Career Fellows, Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford)

4:10-4:30pm Catherine Spencer (Senior Lecturer, History of Art, University of St Andrews), 'The Grand Spiral: Transnational Ecologies at the 1967 Salon de Mayo'

4:30-4:50pm Hope Strickland (artist-filmmaker and visual anthropologist, PhD candidate in Visual Anthropology, UCL), 'The Archive of Aubrey Williams'

4:50-5:00pm Comfort break

5-5:10pm Response by Kobena Mercer (Professor in Art History and Visual Culture, Bard College)

5:10-6pm Panel discussion and questions

11th November 4-6pm GMT
Agro-utopias

4-4:10pm Welcome remarks by Onyeka Igwe (Artist-filmmaker and visiting tutor at the Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford)

4:10-4:30pm Mimi Sheller (Inaugural Dean of the Global School at Worcester Polytechnic Institute), 'The Caribbean Plot as Afro-Futurist Practical Utopia'

4:30-4:50pm Annalee Davis (Artist and Director of Fresh Milk, Barbados), 'Wild Plants, (bush) Tea Services and (bush) Tea Plots — Considering Unsettled Histories through Contemporary Art Practice'

4:50-5:00pm Comfort break

5:00-5:20pm Adrienne Rooney (PhD candidate, History of Art, Rice University), '"Starting from that Earth": The Caribbean Festival of Arts as a Geography of Redress'

5:20pm-5:40pm Anna Arabindan-Kesson (Assistant Professor of African American and Black Diasporic Art, Princeton University), 'Therapeutic Landscapes: Picturesque Plantations and

Medical Vision in the Caribbean'
5:40-6pm Panel discussion and questions

18th November 4-6pm GMT
Tidalectics

4-4:10pm Welcome remarks by Sria Chatterjee (art historian and environmental humanities scholar at the Academy of Art and Design in Basel, Switzerland, and incoming Head of Research and Learning at the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, London)

4:10-4:30pm Elizabeth DeLoughrey (Professor of English, UCLA) 'Drawn by Water'

4:30-5pm Nadia Huggins (Artist) and Kimberly Palmer (Independent researcher in Environmental Studies) 'Offshore Imaginations: Glimpses of Caribbean Futures'

5:00-5:10pm Comfort break

5:10-5:30pm Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert: '"Hurricane PraXis (Xorcising Maria Xperience": Visual Conversations about Hurricanes and Climate Change in the Caribbean'

5:30-6pm Panel discussion and questions

25th November 4-6pm GMT
Extraction

4-4:10pm Welcome remarks by Nicole Smythe-Johnson

4:10-4:40pm Roshini Kempadoo (Artist and Professor at Westminster School of Art) and Alissa Trotz (Professor of Caribbean Studies and Women and Gender Studies, University of Toronto), 'Black, Gold, Dust: Narrative of Extraction and Countering Slow Violence'

4:40-4:50pm Comfort break

4:50-5:10pm Diana McCaulay (Writer and environmental activist), 'On Being the Wrong Messenger'

5:10-5:30pm Deborah Anzinger (Artist and Executive Director, New Local Space Kingston), 'Training Stations'

5:30-6pm Panel discussion and questions

29th November 4-5pm GMT
Roundtable

Leon Wainwright
Carlos Garrido Castellano
Gilane Tawadros

Samantha Noël
Patricia Noxolo
Daniella Rose King
Tatiana Flores

For more information on how to register visit: https://bioticresistance.squarespace.com/

Reference:
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