

Postcolonial Hauntologies (Amsterdam/Montreal/online, 5–8 Mar 25)

Amsterdam / Montreal / online, Mar 5–08, 2025

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Postcolonial Hauntologies: Art in the Presence – Absence of the Past.

Marked by the publication of Derrida's *Specters of Marx* in 1994, the spectral turn saw the spectre as a conceptual signifier of the "invisible visible" or not-fully-realised presence that claims space. The spectre can signify a form of traumatic presence that continues to haunt individuals and societies that have not confronted their troubled pasts. So, Nicholas Abraham's term "phantom" is linked to the transgenerational transmission of shame and guilt. In a broader sense, legacies of violence can persist in affected societies, manifesting in various forms and carrying the threat of re-emergence. In postcolonial contexts, the haunting legacies may include traumas resulting from centuries of racial othering or the delayed consequences of environmental violence.

Art can offer a space for reflection, reconnection, and resistance. Contemporary artists explore the potentialities of their media – indexical, performative, or time-based while touching upon traces and resonances of past and ongoing violence. Museums and institutions face the challenge of dealing with ruptures and continuity within postcolonial structures.

This symposium, held jointly at the University of Amsterdam (Netherlands) and Concordia University (Canada), brings together artists, art historians, curators and early-career researchers from diverse regions to discuss the following questions: How do artists use their media to make the invisible visible or actualize spectral traces? What kinds of temporalities do they create when engaging with haunting legacies? In what ways can museums challenge and transform postcolonial legacies? How do artistic and curatorial methods address the absence in archives and reimagine archival practices? How can engaging with postcolonial hauntologies help us build cross-border solidarities?

Organisers:

Assel Kadyrkhanova (University of Amsterdam)

Mehmet Berkay Sulek (University of Amsterdam) and

Alexandra Tsay (Concordia University)

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PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY March 5, 2025

University of Amsterdam (Amsterdam, Netherlands), Time zone: CET/ Amsterdam

Doelenzaal, University Library Singel

10:20 - Welcome and introduction – Assel Kadyrkhanova

10:30 - 11:45 Keynote lecture 'Modern Art & Decolonial Time: Notes towards a Constellation' by Sanjukta Sunderason, moderated by Colin Sterling.

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SESSION 1: 12:00 - 13:30 – Sensing Otherwise: Decolonial Aesthetics Beyond Vision, moderator: Fabienne Rachmadiev

'Your Ears Later will Know to Listen', Andrea Zarza Canova (University of Nottingham and Nottingham Contemporary)

'The Notion of Sensing in Contemporary Art', Deiara Kouto (KNUST University and Leuphana University).

'Beyond Vision: Reframing Haptic as Decolonial Curatorial Strategy in South Asian Colonial Photography Archives', Tony P. Jacob, artist

'Water is Coming: Hauntings of Colonialism and Environmental Catastrophe', Caroline Spitzner (Radboud University)

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SESSION 2: 14:15 - 15:45 – The Politics of Vision: Justice and Reparation

'Visual Justice and the Haunting of Past, Present, and Future', Christopher Nixon (Rhein-Main University of Applied Sciences)

'Lebanese Martyrs as Specters', Agnes Rameder (Hamburger Bahnhof)

'Postcolonial Hauntologies: Lumumba's Specters in Cinema', Matthias de Groof (University of Antwerp, University of Amsterdam)

'Ancestral Heritage and Reparative Art in Estefanía García Pineda's Tierra, Conejos y Orígenes', Maria Suarez Caicedo (University of Amsterdam).

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16:00 - 17:00 Roundtable: Curating Haunting Legacies
speakers: Mariam Elnozahy (Konsthall C.), Lara Khaldi (De Appel) and Nav Haq (M HKA).
moderators: Mehmet Berkay Sülek and Liang-Kai Yu

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17:10 - 18.40 Film screenings, moderated by Florian Göttke

'All the Dreams We Dream' (21 min) film by Assel Kadyrkhanova (artist, researcher/University of Amsterdam)

'The City Outside Yourself' (21 min) film by Caroline Deodat (artist, filmmaker) + joint presentation by Caroline Deodat and Steyn Bergs (Utrecht University).

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18:40 Closing remarks

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FRIDAY March 7, 2025

Concordia University (Montreal, Canada), Time zone: EST / Montreal

The Jarislowsky Institute, Pavillon Ev Building, 3rd floor, Concordia University

10:00 Welcome and introduction – Alexandra Tsay

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SESSION 1: 10:10 - 11:45 – Epistemic Disruptions and Postcolonial Archive, moderator: Balbir K. Singh

'Reckoning with the Terrible Beauty of the Archive', Ingrid Jones (University of Toronto)

'The conceptual deployment of the archive in the research-driven praxes of contemporary Maghrebi', Nancy Demerdash (College for Creative Studies)

'The Spectre of Crochet: A Woman's Lived Experience', Pragma Sharma (University of Brighton) - online

'Hauntology in Gê Viana's Afro-Indigenous re-imaginings', Rodrigo D'Alcântara (Concordia University)

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SESSION 2: 12:00 - 13:30 – After Violence: Bodies, Memory, and Haunted Spaces

'The Legacy of Violence: Apartheid Monsters and Post-Apartheid Mimicry in the Work of Contemporary South African Artist Jane Alexander', Amy Nygaard (University of Saint Thomas)

'The Bodies that Haunt the Colonial Institute: Human remains in and through Dutch museal space', Pansee Abou ElAtta (Carleton University)

'Nomadic poetic tracings, or how ghostly figures can emerge', Florencia Marchetti (Concordia University)

'(Con)Strained Utopias: Hauntings in the Activist-Workplace', Richenda Grazette (Concordia University)

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14: 30 - 16:30 Video screenings

druzhba narodov (25 min), film by Intizor Otaniyazova, artist based in Almaty, Kazakhstan

The Landmarks of Memory (6:40 min) + short presentation and a Q&A moderated by Manar Abo Touk (20 min), Christina Hajjar, artist

Baigal Nuur - Lake Baikal (9 min), Nutag - Homeland (6 min), The Fourfold (7:14 min), filmmaker Alisi Telengut in conversation with Dr. Alice Jim

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16:30 Closing remarks

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SATURDAY March 8, 2025

Online / Zoom, Time zones: CET | EST

15.00 CET (9:00 EST) Opening remarks

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SESSION 1: 15:10 - 16.40 CET (9:00 - 10:40 EST) – Post-/ Decolonial Aesthetics

'Spectral and Ancestral Alliances Against the Perpetual Reemergence of Colonial Extractive Violence', Juliana Robles de la Pava (Käte Hamburger Centre for Advanced Study)

'Resurgent Waters: Liquid Postcolonial Hauntologies for Decolonizing the Neerlandophone Space', Julee al Bayaty de Ridder (University of Amsterdam)

'Decolonial Aesthesis and the Ecological in the Art of Independent Central Asia', Fabienne Rachmadiev (University of Amsterdam)

'Fibula-Image, or Affects of Becoming-Steppe. Eurasian Nomadism and a Preposterous History of Polish Contemporary Art', Radek Przedpełski (Trinity College Dublin)

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SESSION 2: 16.50 - 18.20 CET (10:50 - 12:20 EST) – Haunted Museums, Alternative Archives

'From Greenland to Bergen: Retracing a Forgotten Colonial History', Tuva Mossin (University of Bergen)

'Imagining Ürkün memory museum', Asel Rashidova (Erasmus Mundus MA: University of Glasgow, University of Tartu, Radboud University)

'Talking Images: Photography as a Tool of Decolonization? Emeka Ogboh's Work "At the Threshold" (2021)', Winona Pawelzik (University of Hamburg)

'Other Archives', Denis Esakov, independent artist de_colonialanguage

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18.30 - 19.30 CET (12:30 - 13:30 EST) Film Screening

'An Asian Ghost Story' (37 min) film by Bo Wang (artist and researcher / University of Amsterdam and Leiden University).

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19.30 CET (13:30 EST) Concluding remarks

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The Amsterdam event is supported by the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis and the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Analysis. It is realised in connection to activities of the ARRG (Artistic Research Research Group), University of Amsterdam

The Concordia event is supported by Montreal's Interuniversity PhD Program in Art History, Concordia University Research Chair in Critical Curatorial Studies and Decolonizing Art Institutions and the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Society and Culture

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Participation is free of charge.

Registration via this link:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfh-DscLOkY00rcgQa-sna33Lh6B7PppOKAazZeANBtTyl-TQ/viewform?usp=header>

Further information: <https://sites.google.com/view/postcolonialhauntologies/home>

Reference:

CONF: Postcolonial Hauntologies (Amsterdam/Montreal/online, 5-8 Mar 25). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 27, 2025 (accessed Mar 3, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/44067>>.