

**UNRAVELING
THE (UNDER)
DEVELOPMENT
C O M P L E X
OR
TOWARDS A
POST-(UNDER)
DEVELOPMENT
I N T E R
DEPENDENCE**

AN ODE TO WALTER RODNEY'S
"HOW EUROPE UNDERDEVELOPED AFRICA"
50 YEARS ON 1972-2022

EXHIBITION WITHIN THE 2-YEAR PROJECT

WITH Jess Atieno Simnikiwe Buhlungu Sheila Chukwulozie Christopher Cozier Binta Diaw
Sènamì Donoumassou Sofia Gallisá Muriente & Natalia Lassalle Morillo Rajyashri Goody Karachi La Jamia
Jean Katambayi Mukendi Tracy Naa Koshie Thompson Syowia Kyambi Wallen Mapondera Anna Mapoubi
Emo de Medeiros Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien Kumari Ranjeeta Moffat Takadiwa
The Victor Jara Collective Munem Wasif Guy Woueté

OPENING 26.11.2022 19:00

WITH performances at 19:00, 20:00 & 22:00 by Stacey Ejiroghene Okparavero,
Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien & Clifton Joseph

OPENING HOURS 27.11.2022–27.01.2023 Thursday–Sunday 14:00–19:00

The exhibition will be closed between 24.12.2022–04.01.2023

WORKSHOP

28.11.–30.11.2022 with Clifton Joseph

INVOCATIONS

28.01.–29.01.2023

SAVVY TOURS IN SAVVY TONGUES

01.12.2022 17:00 IN ENGLISH With jpgs

04.12.2022 16:00 IN ENGLISH With Hajra Haider Karrar

15.01.2023 16:00 IN ENGLISH With Hajra Haider Karrar

20.01.2023 17:00 IN ENGLISH & GERMAN With Kelly Krugman and Lynhan Balatbat-Helbock

22.01.2023 16:00 IN ENGLISH With Hajra Haider Karrar

27.01.2022 17:00 IN ESPAÑOL With jpgs

COLLABORATING INSTITUTIONS

CAMEROON Cameroon, Bandjoun Art Station

KENYA African Digital Heritage and Goethe Institut Nairobi

IVORY COAST Goethe Institut Abidjan

SOUTH AFRICA Goethe Institut Johannesburg

ARTISTIC DIRECTION & CONCEPT Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung

CURATION Hajra Haider Karrar Juan Pablo García Sossa

CURATORIAL ASSISTANCE Kelly Krugman Hubert Gromny Billy Fowo Sagal Farah

GENERAL MANAGEMENT Lema Sikod Lynhan Balatbat-Helbock

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C ● N T E N T

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PRAYER TO MASKS

Léopold Sédar Senghor

Masks! Oh Masks!
Black mask, red mask, you black and white masks,
Rectangular masks through whom the spirit breathes,
I greet you in silence!
And you too, my panterheaded ancestor.
You guard this place, that is closed to any feminine laughter, to any mortal smile.
You purify the air of eternity, here where I breathe the air of my fathers.
Masks of maskless faces, free from dimples and wrinkles.
You have composed this image, this my face that bends
over the altar of white paper.
In the name of your image, listen to me!
Now while the Africa of despotism is dying – it is the agony of a pitiable princess,
Just like Europe to whom she is connected through the
naval.
Now turn your immobile eyes towards your children who
have been called
And who sacrifice their lives like the poor man his last garment
So that hereafter we may cry 'here' at the rebirth of the world being the leaven that the white flour
needs.
For who else would teach rhythm to the world that has
died of machines and cannons?
For who else should ejaculate the cry of joy, that arouses the dead and the wise in a new dawn?
Say, who else could return the memory of life to men with a torn hope?
They call us cotton heads, and coffee men, and oily men.
They call us men of death.
But we are the men of the dance whose feet only gain
power when they beat the hard soil.

Translated from the French by Gerald Moore and Ulli Beier

INTRODUCTION

“Development in human society is a many-sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being. Some of these are virtually moral categories and are difficult to evaluate – depending as they do on the age in which one lives, one’s class origins, and one’s personal code of what is right and what is wrong. (...) The relations which develop within any given social group are crucial to an understanding of the society as a whole: Freedom, responsibility, skill, etc. have real meaning only in terms of the relations of men in society.”¹

Walter Rodney’s well researched and trenchant historical, sociological, and socio-economic account, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, was published in 1972 which makes this year, 2022, its 50 anniversary. The seminal book takes us through the institutionalisation of colonialism, the partitioning of peoples, the imposition of languages and destruction of knowledges and cultures, and how they had repercussions in the moment of 1971/72, and continue to have in the present, 50 years later. He offers the reader a historical exposé of the African continent before the Middle Passage, before the violent and inhumane machinations of the transatlantic slave enterprise. By pointing at a vast range of examples he proved that Africa was never terra nullius. He does not only reveal the material advancements prior to colonisation, but also elaborates on the complex sociocultural structures, some of which perpetrated hierarchies, class structures and exploitation. One can safely say that before the coming of the Europeans to what is now called the Americas, Asia, Australia and the African continent, there were a plethora of civilisations and developments that only began their demise with that encounter.

Rodney also takes us through the era of decolonial movements and does not fail to call out the generation of African leaders who became accomplices with their former colonial rulers in the continuous exploitation of their citizens. Which is to say that the big promises of the “missions civilisatrice” that served as the “excuses” to colonise, as well as the hope or say the claim of colonisation as a means of bringing better education, modernity, technology, and eventually development never really materialised, except infrastructures like roads and railways that actually were built in the first

place to facilitate the exportation of resources from the inlands to the coasts to be shipped to Europe and beyond. As Rodney puts it “in other words, capitalism in the form of colonialism failed to perform in Africa the tasks which it had performed in Europe in changing social relations and liberating the forces of production.”²

As the dependency theorists around Raul Prebisch and others had already pointed out in the 1950s and beyond, to understand economic underdevelopment one needs to comprehend the dependencies on and constraints imposed by global economic and political structures. According to dependency theory, the world is divided into core countries, periphery of the core countries, core of the periphery countries, and periphery of the periphery countries. This division means also an international division of labour whereby the core countries are those fit to do the brain work, do research etc, while the periphery of the periphery countries are fit to do just cheap manual labour and provide the world market with raw materials — often enough produced by child labour under the most unacceptable conditions. These raw materials from the periphery countries are then treated and transformed in the core countries to finished goods, which are then resented to the periphery countries and sold for exorbitantly high prices, depleting the already low capital in these countries that was intended for their industries, health and social systems and general infrastructures. This four-step class distinction has the ultimate goal of exploiting the masses of the so-called “underdeveloped world” in a process of effectuating global capitalism. To put it bluntly, this international/global economic system is meant to keep certain countries developed and to prevent other countries from developing.

The research, exhibition, performance and discourse project UNRAVELLING THE (UNDER) DEVELOPMENT COMPLEX OR TOWARDS THE POST(UNDER) DEVELOPMENT INTERDEPENDENCE takes its cue from, and celebrates Walter Rodney’s *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, while asking the question: How can we imagine a Post-(Under) development world? By relating Rodney’s seminal work to the dependency theorists, as much as to the post-development advocates like Ivan Illich, Gustavo Esteva, Wolfgang Sachs, Arturo Escobar or Majid Rahnema, to the struggles of ecofeminists of degrowth

like Maria Mies, Amaia Pérez Orozco, Chandra Talpade Mohanty among many others, this project is a daring effort to analyse the status quo and imagine a world that doesn’t exist in the binary of “development” and “underdevelopment”. The envisioning of such a world does not only require a theoretical thinking and framing but also the performativity of various notions of that thing some call *progress*. As a guerilla theorist, Rodney’s thinking interweaves academic spheres and ground realities. Various artistic practices make the paradoxes visible which are embedded in the constructs of “development” and “underdevelopment”. These practices are not limited to highlighting the contradictions by making them visible, they are also generative spaces that propose options and possibilities. Some practices examine the notion of waste and the dependent cycles of trade, others examine systemic politics of exclusion and division. They provide transtemporal dialogues between the dynamics these systems are rooted in and the ruptures provoked by them. In this project we are interested in looking at what emerges from these ruptures and what can grow from the cracks.

The post in Post-(Under)development is not meant as a negation of development in the sense of “an event constituting a new stage in a changing situation,”³ but a breaking free from an ideology of development that is framed around a gradient of colonial power and ingrained in colonial capitalist structures of dependency. Post-(Under)development is the negation of the subordination and denigration that is connoted in and with “under”, it is the emancipation from the imperialist logic of extortion and profit of one at the detriment of the other. It is an imaginary that embraces inter- and intra-dependencies as modes of being together in a world in which our well-being, our breath is contingent on the well-being and breath of the other, and the plethora of knowledges, arts, sciences, technologies, philosophies that facilitate our situated being in the world with and in relation to others. With this project we aim at shaping a pluriverse of interdependent imaginations, visions, and strategies, away from capitalist and industrial productivity and toward transformative conviviality.

The project has been choreographed to manifest itself in multiple locales (Bandjoun, Nairobi, Berlin, Abidjan, and Johannesburg) as a series of research, exhibition, performances, lectures, conversations, and workshops around the myths of “development” and “underdevelopment” as well as imagining and crafting a Post-(Under)development world.

¹ Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Cape Town, Dakar, Nairobi, Oxford: Pambazuka Press 2012 (orig: London: Bogle-L’Ouverture Publications, 1972), 58.
² *Ibid*, 216.

³ From the entry on “development” in the Oxford Dictionary

ELLE ME DIT

Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien

En tissant mon jardin,___ J'ai senti cette chose spéciale.
J'y ai cueilli des plantes,___ que je vous partage

Unité dit l'univers
Unité dit la nature

Unité dit le monde car nous sommes tous concernés.

Je suis un principe de dualité,
de pluralité.

Corps Fibreux
Corps Fiévreux

Homme femme - Femme homme
Homme - homme - Femme femme
Homme plante - Femme terre
Femme ciel - Hommefemme Univers.

Fleuve de sève
Sève de plante
Sève de fleurs
Sève de mon corps

Tisser les mondes,
ceux qui nous ont créé

Et le vent souffle
Et mes racines poussent

Tisser la terre et la fertiliser.

Et le Ciel devient pourpre

Elle me parle de la terre,
Elle me dit qu'elle est tous.

À travers
Un soleil Écarlate
Chemins , Cheminement
Ligne Blanchâtres
Fluide, Horizon

Elle me parle de la lune
Elle me parle du soleil , de la pluie, du vent qui nous
éffleure tous,
de se que nous ne voyons pas et qui pourtant se trouve
bien là,

Elle me parle des liens qui nous relient, et
de ceux qui nous séparent

Je suis une racine
je suis la lumière
je suis la terre de ma chair
Je suis le vent
Je suis le soleil
je suis l'air
Je suis masse

Elle me dit de guerrier,
de prendre soin

Elles me parlent toutes du pouvoir de ce qui nous
connecte, nourrit, guerrit, crée.

Elle me dit qu'il est nécessaire de se recentrer sur
L'humanité, L'humanité, L'Humanité, qui à tendance à
c'effacer.

Je suis silence
Je suis le bruit environnant
Je suis les galaxies
Je suis les étoiles
Je suis la mer
Je suis une forme cosmique
Je suis une force calme.

Elle te dit de ne pas céder.
Oui----- Elle émane de l'intérieur
Elle sort de l'obscurité : de la terre, des racines...

Elle surgit du dedans, pour s'offrir au dehors.

Cette énergie, Ce pouvoir,
Il vient de notre sang, de nos vies, de nos desirs,
pour le vivant, le subtil, l'instantané, le secret, le
précieux
L'Être, L'Autre et L'Entre

Sie sagt mir
Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien

Übersetzung von Paris Furst

Beim Weben meines Gartens,___ spürte ich diese besondere Sache.
Ich pflückte dort einige Pflanzen, _____ die ich mit euch teile

Einssein sagt das Universum
Einssein sagt die Natur

Einssein sagt die Welt, denn wir sind alle beteiligt.

Ich bin ein Prinzip der Dualität,
der Pluralität.

Mann Frau - Frau Mann
Mann - Mann - Frau Frau
Mann Pflanze - Frau Erde
Himmel Frau - Mannfrau Universum.

Die Welten weben,
die, die uns erschaffen haben

Die Erde weben und sie befruchten.

Sie erzählt mir von der Erde,
Sie sagt, dass sie alles sei.

Sie erzählt mir vom Mond
Sie erzählt mir von der Sonne, dem Regen, dem Wind,
der uns alle umweht, von dem, was wir nicht sehen, was
aber dennoch da ist,

Sie erzählt mir von den Banden, die uns verbinden, und
von denen, die uns trennen

Sie sagt mir, dass ich heilen soll,
sich kümmern

Sie alle erzählen mir von der Kraft dessen, was uns
verbindet, uns nährt, uns heilt, erschafft.

Sie sagt mir, es ist notwendig, sich zu zentrieren auf
Menschheit, Menschheit, Menschheit, die dazu neigt zu
verschwinden.

Sie sagt dir, nicht nachzugeben.
Ja----- Sie fließt aus dem Inneren
Sie erhebt sich aus Verborgenheit: aus der Erde, den
Wurzeln...

Sie taucht von innen auf, bietet sich außen an.

Diese Energie, Diese Kraft,
Sie kommt aus unserem Blut, unserem Leben, unseren
Sehnsüchten,

für das Lebendige, das Subtile, das Plötzliche, das
Geheime, das Kostbare.

Das Sein, das Andere und das Dazwischen

Fasriger Körper
Fiebriger Körper

Fluss des Saftes
Saft der Pflanze
Saft der Blumen
Saft meines Körpers

Und der Wind weht
Und meine Wurzeln wachsen

Und der Himmel wird lila

Über
Eine scharlachrote Sonne
Pfade, Fortschritt
Weißliche Linien
Flüssig, Horizont
Ich bin eine Wurzel
ich bin das Licht
ich bin die Erde meines Fleisches
Ich bin der Wind
Ich bin die Sonne
ich bin die Luft
Ich bin Masse

Ich bin Ruhe
Ich bin der umgebende Lärm
Ich bin die Galaxien
Ich bin die Sterne
Ich bin das Meer
Ich bin eine kosmische Form
Ich bin eine stille Kraft.

She tells me
Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien

Translation by Paris Furst

Weaving my garden, _____ I felt that special thing.
There I picked some plants, _____ which I share with you

Oneness says the universe
Oneness says nature

Oneness says the world for we are all involved.

I am a principle of duality,
of plurality.

Man woman - woman man
Man - man - Woman woman
Man plant - Woman earth
Woman sky - Manwoman Universe.

Weaving the worlds,
those who created us

Weaving the earth and making it fertile.

She tells me of the earth,
She says that she is all.

She tells me of the moon
She speaks to me of sun, of the rain, of the wind which
brushes us all,
of what we do not see but which is yet there,

She tells me of the ties that relate us, and
those that separate us

She tells me to heal,
to take care

They all speak to me of the power of that which
connects,
feeds, heals, creates us.

She tells me that we have to refocus on
humanity, humanity, Humanity, which tends to
disappear.

She tells you to not give up.
Yes - she flows from within
She rises from obscurity: from the earth, from the
roots...

She emerges from inside, to offer herself outside.

This energy, This power,
It comes from our blood, from our lives, from our
desires,
for the living, the subtle, the sudden, the secret, the
precious
The Being, The Other, The Between

Fibrous body
Feverous body

River of sap
Sap of plant
Sap of flowers
Sap of my body

And the wind blows
And my roots grow

And the Sky turns purple

Across
A scarlet sun
Paths, Progress
Whitish lines
Fluid, Horizon

I am a root
I am the light
I am the earth of my flesh
I am the wind
I am the sun
I am air
I am mass

I am silence
I am the surrounding noise
I am the galaxies
I am the stars
I am the sea
I am a cosmic form
I am a still force.

TRACING UNRAVELING THE (UNDER) DEVELOPMENT COMPLEX OR TOWARDS A POST-(UNDER) DEVELOPMENT INTERDEPENDENCE

Within the SAVVY.doc, a WALTER RODNEY PLAYLIST streams in circulation: bringing inscriptions of knowledge through sound to live near the inscriptions of knowledge of the library. Sonically braided by the curatorial team, it features a wide range of musicians and poets such as Bi Kidude, Miriam Makeba, Bocafloja, Clifton Joseph, and Hanif Abdurraqib.

When approaching the space, at street level coming from the west, visitors find three windows covered with open pamphlets placed as double sided posters. CHRISTOPHER COZIER's *When you miss me – I gone*, welcomes us before we begin the journey into the interior of the exhibition, revisiting a Cultural Autopsy of mind-state transiting from undelivered promises and violences sparked by Walter Rodney's assassination in Georgetown, Guyana, in 1980.

Hanging from the ceiling above Archive Book's and SAVVY.doc's joined space, inter-connected DAHOMEY FLAGS form a canopy layer billowing down from above. Located in West Africa, and now in present day Benin, the Dahomey Kingdom existed from approximately 1600 until the 1900s. These flags depict what to some might be perceived as mere animals in strong colors; what others educated in their emblems

can read, is the depiction of diverse kingdoms in their legacies. Contrary to the assumption that there were no progressive technologies or potent societies in the African continent, these Dahomey Flags remind us that there are endless symbols that can be neglected by a simple gaze, when codes are not being inquired into or shared.

Another reverberation all the way from the coastal regions of Ghana can be experienced on the right where a selection of ASAF O FLAGS from the Fante people grace the ceiling, depicting Akan proverbs, visual imagery, rank, and ceremony. A symbol for security and warfare, these ceremonial flags depict the Fante people responsible for infrastructure and community needs. Asafo Flags are a reminder of another local system devised by the people of the land that was eliminated by European colonization.

TRACY NAA KOSHIE THOMPSON's work *Olonka* opens alternative systems of possibility beyond western impositions of frames, nodding to Rodney's calls for autonomous and self-sustaining communities. Thompson exemplifies a metric used for measuring grains and doughs in Ghana's local markets, where we look at an ingenious and inclusive strategy resisting capitalist frameworks which dehumanize and undermine systems other than their own.

Near to it, BINTA DIAW's installation

1.

12.

44.

Third Chapter bears witness to the histories and atrocities inflicted by French colonial rule in West Africa. Diaw's visual and sonic work challenges archival knowledge imposed by Western hegemony by embracing oral traditions of documentations existing in West African traditions. The work attests to the power of germination and transmissions of historical narratives that offer archival truths, despite what had been forcefully hidden or miswritten by western powers. We are reminded of the capacity to break free from the "bondage of development and underdevelopment" that Walter Rodney deliberates upon by looking towards fugitive practices that hide for protection as in the chéchia hats, or grow within soil, as in the corn plant which fueled the Tirailleurs Sénégalais.

MOFFAT TAKADIWA's installation *Land of Coca-Cola and Colgate* strings together the lingering experiences left behind by imperial British rule in Zimbabwe using everyday discarded materials that are part and parcel of the cobweb of post-colonial structures. For Takadiwa, this choice of materials establishes a communication with issues not just of imperialism but also of excessive consumerism and its impacts on the environment which are tied into it.

Distributed throughout the space, several mapping pieces are placed. MARIE-CLAIRE MESSOUMA MANLANBIEN's *Map #14 / Map #15, Map # 21, Map #23 Map # 28* form a constellation in the space bridging diverse materials and grounds. One of Rodney's annotations towards the underdevelopment process is the breaking of collectivity and praise of individualism. Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien not only maps, but also forms circuit diagrams interconnecting systems within systems.

Walking further into the space, converging in the peripheral, THE VICTOR JARA COLLECTIVE's two documentaries, from 1978 and 1983, piece together the elemental anti-colonial resistance as British Guiana and socio-political and economic struggles in Guyanese history. Banned by the Guyanese government and rarely screened since, *The Terror and the Time* contextualizes Guyana's first "internal self-government" under the then prevailing global dynamics of cold war whereas their second work *In the Sky's Wild Noise*, follows an interview with Walter Rodney cut and spread with archival footage from 1970s Guyana.

MUNEM WASIF's works investigate the notion of traces through moving images, archival documents, and collected paraphernalia to reveal impermanence

and insecurity, speaking towards complex issues such as food sovereignty, labour exploitation, borders, and migration. With him, we look towards global challenges in their diversity to understand the cracks in well-being for working class populations and the fruits of their labor.

Featured upstairs and downstairs, the three woven tapestries by JESSATIENO are part of a larger series entitled *A Place Without A Name* mapping colonial pasts while analyzing the symbolic power of the flag. Her work calls upon our rethinking relationships to constructed nationalist identities, echoing Rodney's alarms to dis-identify and re-identify with restorative forms of social solidarity.

With a spread of 16 works, SENAMI DONOUMASSOU's *Fà gbésisà* which can be experienced as allegories, incantory words, or proverbs are presented in a fused format: between tarot cards and polaroid, we are presented with the embodied knowledge embedded in the Fà. A divinatory art, the Fà – the orginary of Ilé Ifè in the former Kingdom of Oyo in Nigeria, occupies an important place in most cultures of the peoples of Benin crossing literature, songs, and signs: observing and praising its living knowledge systems.

JEAN KATAMBAYI MUKENDI's drawing *Tentacles* is full with filaments and wires referring to raw materials unearthed in Lubumbashi, DRC's mining capital and a hub for some of the world's largest copper and cobalt interests. In this piece, Mukendi confronts the machinations of global capital which produce uneven development and neocolonial dependencies on local and hemispheric scales.

Further in, navigating your way through the partitions, you arrive at KARACHI LAJAMIA's artistic practice of pedagogy built into strategies of resistances and unlearning. By creating a site where you can relax, sit, and engage, this compilation of works demonstrates the practices of working with approaches of un-learning and re-constructions under the violent neo-colonial structures in Pakistan.

We move then to a 4-channel installation: SOFIA GALLISÁ MURIENTE & NATALIA LASSALLE MORILLO's *Foreign in a Domestic Sense* gathers testimonies and imaginaries of Puerto Ricans who have migrated to Central Florida, connecting the lived experiences of people who are part of the fastest-growing Puerto Rican population in the United States, as a result of political and environmental disasters in the archipelago. Their work puts displacement into the foreground of our conversations, echoing Rodney's calls to look closely at the effects of western colonialism and imperialism's exploitations which violently uproot resources and people from their homes.

At a double side wall R A J Y A S H R I G O O D Y shares her *Writing Recipes* and *Deeksha*. Both works reflect on matters of invisibility, visibility, presence and the lack of in relation to Dalit experiences. Photographs in porcelain paper and a text emerging from the wall in clay, compose *Deeksha*. It is a reflection on the impacts of religious conversions. At the other side of the wall, recipe books combine poetry and instructions for agency. These works address the effects of the dynamics performed by the constructs we live in, many of them imposed in the name of progress, humanity, and development; it exists as well in the space of the possibility and agency, to transmute towards other possible worlds.

Turning to the staircase, W A L L E N M A P O N D E R A 's work asks us to trace the resources we consume and where they come from. Witnessing the weave stringing together pieces that helped in bringing goods to Zimbabwe, *Chirukwa* lays bare the foundation of many inequalities upon which global trade currently exists.

A N N A M A P O U B I 's *Nyambéisme* series, making up a compilation of drawings, invokes the rich and hybrid spiritualities of Mbok Nyambéism of the Bassa people of Cameroon which lived long past the periods of colonization, and continue to breathe their visions of worldmaking. The poetics of Nyambéism has found its home in many languages of the Bantu peoples, a poetics that knows only one thing – to put the world in constant motion, keeping the primordial dance of generative creation alive.

Entering the stairs, S I M N I K I W E B U H L U N G U 's sound installation follows as you walk down and guides you to the narratives of sites connected cyclically and culturally through their colonial histories. Immersing and descending oneself in these soundscapes, *Berlin 2 Berlin* raises the question about origins and relations embedded in knowledge referencing.

When entering the underground space, you see two hanging boards with suits. With S Y O W I A K Y A M B I , we face the Kaunda suit and its representations of ideas and symbolisms across generations and classes from the independence era on the African continent and its influences, from Zambia to Kenya, peering into its manifold transformations across countries into today. With Kyambi, we contemplate layers of history as a means of looking into perpetuated hierarchies and sociocultural structures, to trail our relations to its machinations.

K U M A R I R A N J E E T A 's selection of a series of paintings from her larger project *Poetry of Resistance: Domesticity and the World*, outstretches the wall and

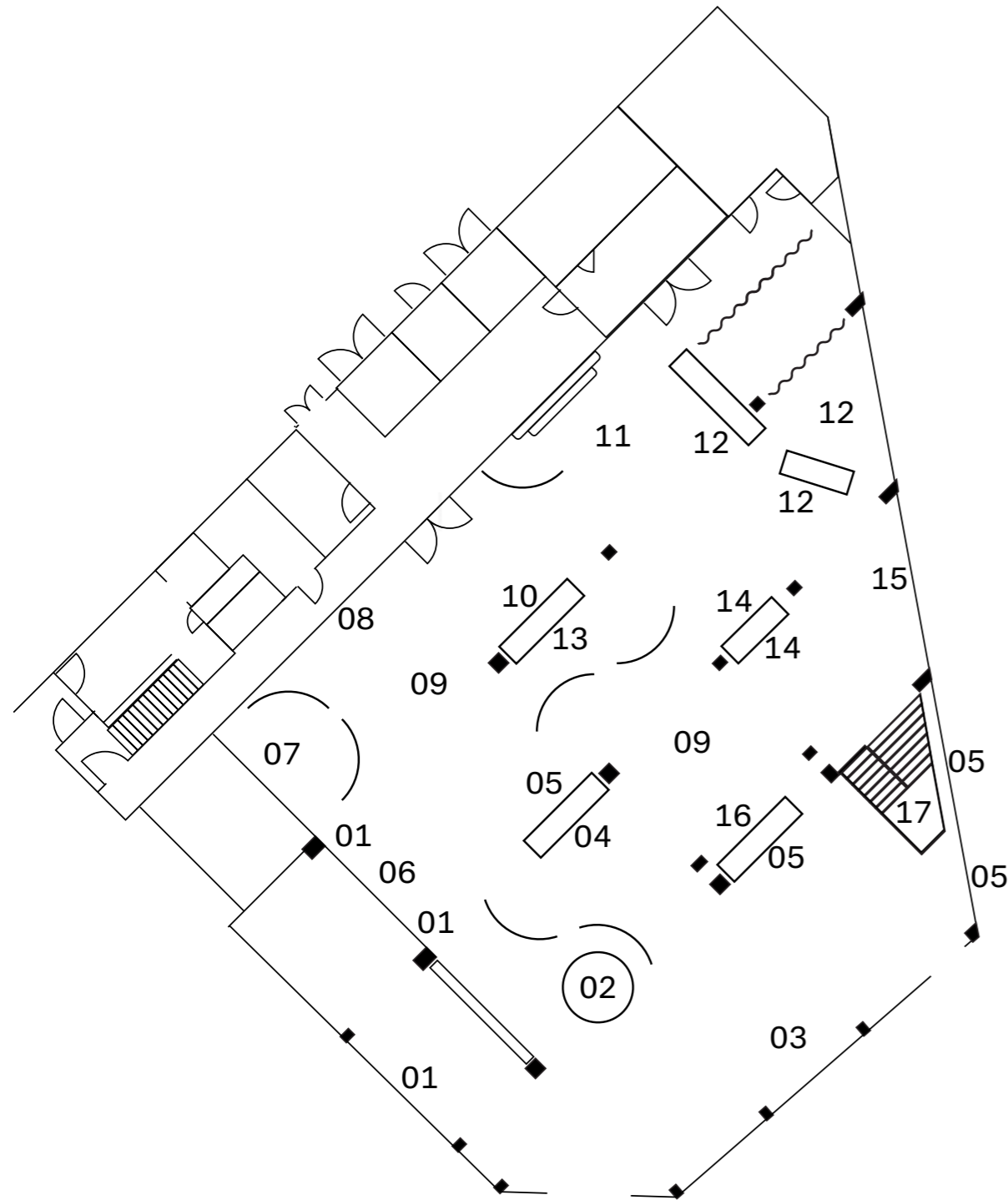
gleams into meditations upon labor and women on the margins, domesticity and hope, struggle and desire. Bihari women and their stories of solidarity are at the center, underpinned by folk tales, songs, and tales on homeland, Ranjeet's visual poetry of their shared sorrows and expressions of resilience are brought to life.

In a multidimensional, transmedia piece, E M O D E M E D E I R O S takes us through 512 videos that are recombined in a video piece that never ends, celebrating the Kaleta tradition invented in Benin by Afro-Brazilians: a unique mix of Brazilian carnival, American Halloween, and Beninese mask traditions of the Zangbeto. The performative installation immerses us in ancestral communication, transformation, and mutual exchanges of knowledge and culture to acknowledge the resilience and survival of knowledge amidst violent systemic attempts of erasure.

S H E I L A C H U K W U L O Z I E 's experimental video *Ugonachomma, Mmma na cho Ugo* folds time, insisting we evaluate prescriptions of beauty that come in the shapes of western gazes. Esteeming the complexities held by darkness, and the vital life within conceptions of the English word "monstrous", we trail an ancient Igbo figurine that is juxtaposed: standing as an epitome of beauty.

In an isolated room as one descends the staircase, G U Y W O U E T É 's research invites you to not just witness but walk along with the political, social, and spatial processes refugees live through in the camps of Malta. As the scenes and gazes from the movie are entrapping not just for the protagonist but also for the viewer, *Corridor* takes you to the experiences of being suspended in time, location, and changing political currents.

FLOORPLAN



01 CHRISTOPHER COZIER
When you miss me – I gone
 Poster-zine, 2000 copies, 59,4 x 42 cm, 2020

02 TRACY NAA KOSHIE THOMPSON
Olonka with Love
 Installation, pink variant of gari (cassava granules), and biscuit petals, variable dimensions, 2022

03 BINTA DIAW
 1.
 12.
 44.
 Third Chapter
 Installation, soil, corn and millet plants, chéchia hats, sound 2022

04 MOFFAT TAKADIWA
Land of Coca-Cola and Colgate
 Installation, toothpaste tubes, plastic toothbrush heads, plastic bottle caps, 348 x 203,2 x 15,2 cm, 2019

05 MARIE-CLAIRE MESSOUMA
 MANLANBIEN
Map #14 / Map #15
 Wall hanging, jute fiber, raffia fiber, plaster, scraper, aluminum, copper, hair, tenjin paper, 60 x 70 cm each, 2019

Map # 21
 Wall hanging, ceramic and textile, Weaving, sewing, velvety, embroidery, sculpture, braiding, 120 x 100 cm, 2019

Map #23
 Wall hanging, jute fiber, hair, scraper, raffia fiber, aluminum, copper, resin, 200 x 300 cm, 2018–2021

Map # 28
 Wall hanging, ceramic and textile, jute fiber, hair, scraper, raffia fiber, aluminum, copper, wax, resin, 90 cm x 190 cm, 2019–2021

06 WALTER RODNEY
Crisis in the Periphery Africa and the Caribbean
 Lecture, 1978

07 THE VICTOR JARA COLLECTIVE
The Terror and the Time
 Film, 75 mins, 1978

In the Sky's Wild Noise
 Film, 29 mins, 1983

08 MUNEM WASIF
Seeds Shall Set Us Free II
 Cyanotypes prints, inkjet prints, archival documents, photographic reproductions of drawings, dimensions variable, 2017–2019

09 JESS ATIENO
TRANCE I
 Woven tapestry, cotton yarn, 90 x 140 cm, 2022

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 Woven tapestry, cotton yarn, 90 x 140 cm, 2022

TANGENTS OF PLACE
 Woven tapestry, cotton yarn, 90 x 140 cm, 2022

10 JEAN KATAMBAYI MUKENDI
Tentacles
 Drawing, ballpoint ink on Bristol paper with black wood frame, 100 x 70 cm, 2022

11 KARACHI LA JAMIA
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 Text, photographs, video excerpts, 2017–2018

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Stateless Study
 Text document, 2016–2022

12 SOFIA GALLISÁ MURIENTE & NATALIA LASSALLE MORILLO
Foreign in a Domestic Sense
 4-channel installation with sound, 4k, Hi8 and HD video with hand developed Super8 film, 32 mins, 2021

13 SÈNAMI DONOUMASSOU
Fà gbésisà
 Series of 16 photograms, silver barium paper, 17,8 x 12,7 cm, 2022

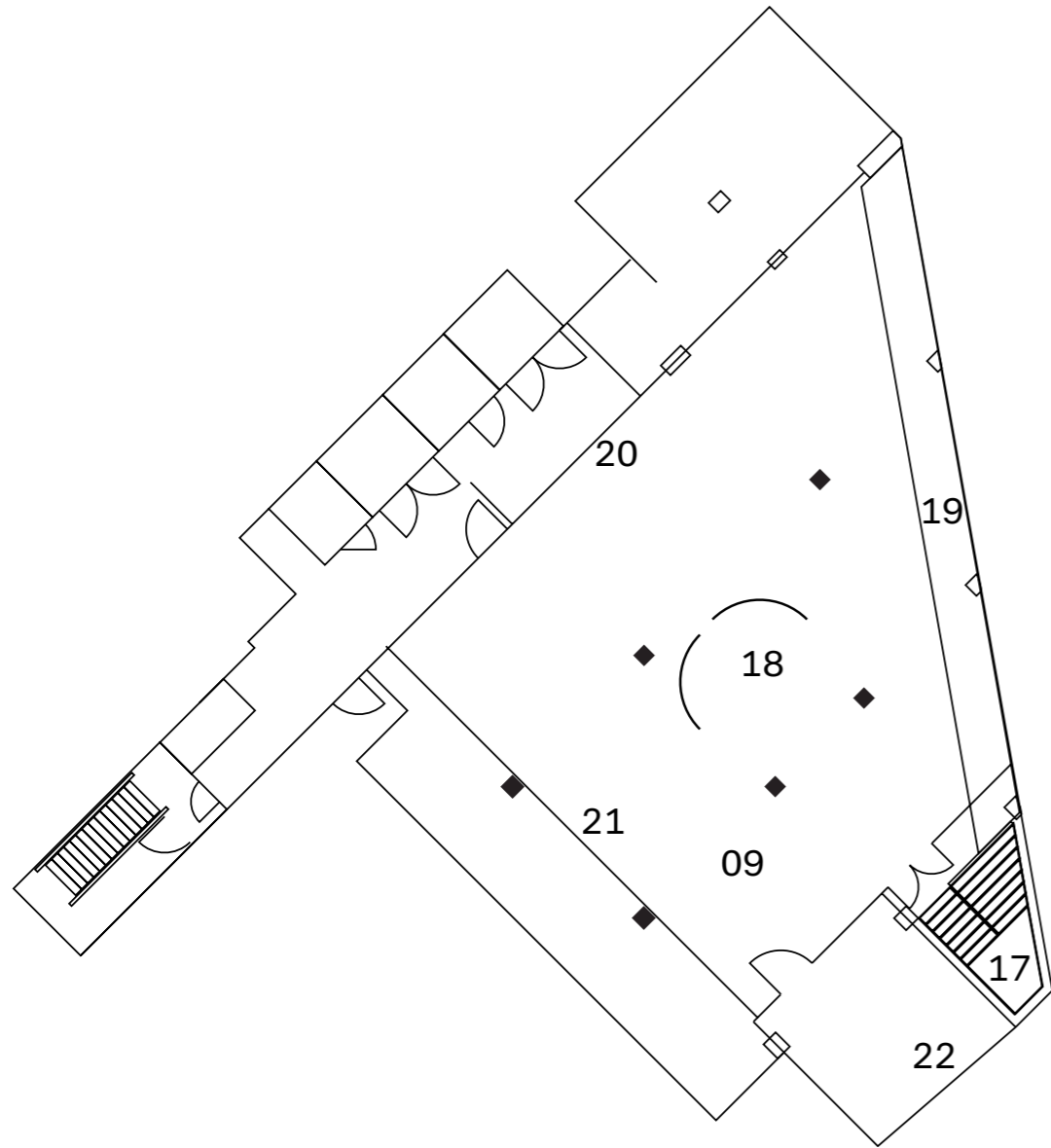
14 RAJYASHRI GOODY
Writing Recipes
 A5 paper booklets, 2016–ongoing

Deeksha
 Photographs, paper, porcelain, clay slip, 2022–ongoing

15 WALLEN MAPONDERA
Chirukwa
 Installation, 2022

16 ANNA MAPOUBI
Série Nyambéisme (ongoing)
 Drawings, colored pencils, inks, pens, acrylics on paper, 2018–2022

FLOORPLAN



17 SIMNIKIWE BUHLUNGU

Berlin 2 Berlin

Sound Installation, 25:55 mins, 2020

18 SYOWIA KYAMBI

1964–2018

Kaunda suits, boards, lighting, 250 x 45 cm, 2018

19 KUMARI RANJEETA

Beyond the Line II

Paintings, watercolor, sequins, and old cotton saree on paper, 2022

20 EMO DE MEDEIROS

Kaleta/Kaleta (an excerpt)

Video, three channel, duration, 2014–2017

21 SHEILA CHUKWULOZIE

Ugonachomma, Mmma na cho Ugo

Video, 2:09 mins, 2019

22 GUY WOUETÉ

Corridor

Video, HD video 16/9, single channel projection loop, colour, sound/noises, 10:45 mins, 2010

N I G E R

Maï-Do Hamisultane-Lahlou

Niger
You You
Do you know who you are?
Of your past branches appearing in your land
The Nile. Senegal. Those names removed from
revisited maps
Do you know?
Here your identity many a time inhumed

Concatenation of time
From Port Harcourt to the mounts Tingi with your
Waters gently carried away
From Mekrou to Sankarani

Can you hear them singing?
Bamako

Koulikoro
Ségou
Djenné
Mopti

Niafunké
Gao
Tilabéri
Niamey
Kollo

Gaya
Say
Malanville
Onitsha

Their dissonant voices
Joining forces in you

Hear- Them Look- At- Them Accommodate- Them for their human faces love them

Tinkisso
Niandan
Milo
Sankarani
Bani
Garouol
Dargol
Sirba
Tapoa Gouroubi Diamango Mékrou Alibori Sota
Sokoto
Kaduna
Bénoué

Diffluents streams of thoughts
Rushing to you
Listen- To- Them- Let- Them- Go- Pick- Them
For their conflicting voices carress- them

Until freedom
Fot them to wash ashore

Irrigated from your sap
The dried-up lands
In your divided waters

WORKS & BIOS

01 CHRISTOPHER COZIER

When you miss me – I gone

Poster-zine, 2000 copies, 59,4 x 42 cm, 2020

The work of Christopher Cozier opens a space for reflection by juxtaposing his intricate drawings and photographic material about the violence caused by utopian thinking. His journey takes us through a non-linear narrative from Masaccio's "Expulsion from Paradise" to a guerrilla organization that operated in the Caribbean in the 1970s, all the way to a terrifying thought that connects the nation-state, political ideologies and body control. *When you miss me – I gone* is about the undelivered promises and violence of the state. He continues to carry on the process of archiving and producing counter memory that challenges the ideological apparatus behind the representation of the Caribbean, contradicting and revising the official history and the construction of nationalism.

CHRISTOPHER COZIER is an artist, living and working in Trinidad and a co-director of Alice Yard, a collective which participated in Documenta 15. He was awarded a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant in 2004 and is a Prince Claus Award laureate, 2013. Through his notebook drawings to installations derived from recorded staged actions, Cozier investigates how Caribbean historical and current experiences can inform understandings of the wider contemporary world. Exhibitions include the 5th & 7th Havana Biennials; *Infinite Island*, The Brooklyn Museum, (2007); *Afro Modern: Journeys through the Black Atlantic* (2010), TATE Liverpool; *Entanglements* (2015), Broad Museum, Michigan; *Relational Undercurrents* (2017), MOLAA., L.A.; *The Sea is History* (2019), Historiskmuseum, Oslo. Cozier participated in the public program of 10th Berlin Biennial, 2018, exhibited in the 14th Sharjah Biennial in 2019, the 11th Liverpool Biennial in 2021, Industrial Art Biennial, Croatia, 2020 and currently in Más Allá, el Mar Canta (*Beyond, the Sea Sings*) at the Times Art Center, Berlin, as well as *Fragments of Epic Memory* at the AGO (Art Gallery of Ontario) and *Experiences of Oil* at the Stavanger Museum, Norway.

02 TRACY NAA KOSHIE THOMPSON

Olonka with Love

Installation, pink variant of gari (cassava granules), and biscuit petals, variable dimensions, 2022

Olonka is a local metric used for measuring grains and doughs in Ghana's local markets. This metric system repurposes tin food containers such as the ones tomato paste is sold in and is a loose model that sellers offer beyond a standardised metric. It is a flexible market system unlike those of industrial capitalist enterprises, that seal commodities in fixed prices and quantities that give no room for human leniency and negotiation. The olonka looks at ingenious and inclusive strategies extending outside of a capitalist framework, which dehumanizes and undermines non-western systems.

TRACY NAA KOSHIE THOMPSON is a Ghanaian artist living and working in Kumasi and Accra. She is currently a Fine Art (PhD) student at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi, Ghana. Thompson has an independent practice within the post-production of food and non-human agencies in artistic production, which are profoundly influenced by the emancipatory teachings of the pedagogue kari'kächä seid'ou. Thompson in recent times explores the topography or "micro-landscapes" within the substrates of her mutated food polymers. Thompson's work has featured in *Cornfields in Accra* (2016) and *Orderly Disorderly* (2017), organized by blaxTARLINES KUMASI in Accra, Ghana. She participated in the inaugural Stellenbosch Triennial (2020) in South Africa. She also participated in the exhibition *Of Materials and Things*, which was part of the Saison Africa 2020, curated by the Exit Frame collective in Roubaix, France (2021). Alongside Kwasi Ohene-Ayeh and Adwoa Amoah, Thompson co-curated the retrospective exhibition of Agyeman Ossei, *Akutia: Blindfolding the Sun and the Poetics of Peace*, at the Savanna Centre for Contemporary Art, Tamale (2021). In 2022, she exhibited at SCCA group exhibition *Existing Otherwise – Future of Coexistence*. Currently, she curates for Compound House Gallery in Accra.

03 BINTA DIAW

1.

12.

44.

Third Chapter, 2022

Installation, soil, corn and millet plants, chéchia hats, sound

The work directly references the complex and multifaceted history of the Tirailleurs Sénégalais, men who were enlisted in various conflicts by the French army corps during French colonial rule in West Africa. The date mentioned in the title, the first of December of 1944, recalls the massacre carried out by the French command of an entire army transit camp in Thiaroye, Senegal.

The title's vertical presentation refers to a computational column, reminiscent of the continuous and contested calculation of the total number of victims from that day. By imposing this graphic spacing, Diaw also references the many unknown burial grounds of the massacre's victims.

Returning to Senegal from World War II – for which they had fought on the front lines of the fiercest battles on behalf of France – the Tirailleurs were waiting to be reunited with their families. The Thiaroye massacre becomes a sad and unacceptable conclusion to a history that is already atrocious in itself. Even more horrific is that there is still no accurate or official recognition of the brutal truth, either in terms of numbers or possible reparations for the victims' families.

The installation brings together several significant elements of this history: starting with soil, divided into tracks commonly used in agriculture to allude to the fact that many of the Tirailleurs were farmers by profession, but also to rows of war trenches and the soil's universal symbolism of origin, territory, birth, and belonging. This plot of land bears multiple hats from the uniform of the Tirailleurs, who since the end of the 19th century have worn this distinctive item which still remains a part in traditions of Senegalese clothing. These hats, known as chéchia, were chosen by the French for the armies of West African Tirailleurs. They were used for several functions, such as hiding things or serving as a dish to eat rice from under challenging conditions. It became a distinctive feature of great importance to the regiments. At the same time, its red color invited danger in the trenches, being visible from afar due to its bright, unnatural tone, another detail that underlines the negligence of the French in their choice of clothing for the African troops. In Diaw's installation, a hole in the hat leaves space for the growth of a corn plant, a common food staple of the Tirailleurs.

The sculpture is accompanied by a sound installation that reports on various sources and documents. Listing

out the names of people wrongly put on trial and prosecuted, this audio work is a polyvocal piece that outlines the limitations of documentation, while also expanding Western notions of the archive.

The reading out of names in the sound installation echoes the Wolof oral tradition of remembering or acknowledging a person's qualities in a more expansive way, again drawing on the discrepancy between the victims of the massacre from the first of December in 1944. The narrator's voice also reads from court documents, presenting the written documentation of the event. Biased towards France's colonial agenda, these court documents are incomplete and inaccurate to the actual events which unfolded.

The whole script is combined with the sound of a typical Guinean flute. Written and performed by the musician and griot Dudù Kouate, the sound piece is a continuation of a West African tradition dating as far back as the 13th century. Diaw's collaborator is part of a lineage of storytellers known as griots. This oral tradition of documentation is a musical form commemorating and preserving significant moments of a community. Traditionally, a griot keeps records of all the births, deaths, marriages through the generations of the village or family, thus playing an essential role in African societies. Their role is necessary for the transmission of historical facts, as a living existence-archive who preserves genealogies, historical narratives, and oral traditions of their people.

Text by Jennifer Chert

BINTA DIAW is an artist born and raised in Italy and of Senegalese origin. She engages in an ongoing investigation to understand the plural identities that emanate from her own experience as a young Black woman from the African diaspora in Europe, which she extends to the experiences of Black women who share similar stories. The symbolism of hair has been very present in her formation, as it is in all African traditions and communities that constitute and define essential chains of knowledge and memory transmissions through matrilineal lineage.

04 MOFFAT TAKADIWA

Land of Coca-Cola and Colgate

Installation, toothpaste tubes, plastic toothbrush heads, plastic bottle caps, 348 × 203,2 × 15,2 cm, 2019

For Moffat Takadiwa, the polluted lands in his country are as problematic as the detriments of colonial power. With works like *The Land of Coca-Cola and Colgate*, he seeks to raise environmental concerns while metaphorically highlighting the Zimbabwean experience as a culmination of residual complications left behind by imperial British rule.

M O F F A T T A K A D I W A lives and works in Harare, Zimbabwe in the neighborhood of Mbare, one of the biggest hotspots for the recycling and repurposing microeconomy in the country. For years, Takadiwa has been utilizing his practice with a focus on rehabilitating his community, promoting an urban development project with the goal of establishing a community-oriented arts district. Working with local upcoming young artists and young creatives, Takadiwa aims to create the world's first arts district made of reused and repurposed materials. Takadiwa graduated with a BA Honours from Harare Polytechnic College in 2008.

Takadiwa creates large-scale sculptural pieces from ordinarily discarded materials, including everything from computer waste, aerosol cans and spray bottles, to toothbrushes and toothpaste tubes. He weaves together these small everyday objects to make impressive organic forms evocative of jewel-encrusted excess or a ritualistic type of minimalism. The artist's choice of materials communicates his concern with issues around consumerism, inequality, post-colonialism, and the environment.

Part of the post-independence generation of artists in Zimbabwe, Takadiwa has exhibited extensively across major institutions in Zimbabwe as well as internationally. Takadiwa also was a founder of Mbare Art Space in Harare where he plays a part in mentoring the growing artist community.

05 M A R I E - C L A I R E M E S S O U M A
M A N L A N B I E N
Map #14 / Map #15
Wall hanging, jute fiber, raffia fiber, plaster, scraper, aluminum, copper, hair, tenjin paper, 60 x 70 cm each, 2019

Map # 21
Wall hanging, ceramic and textile, weaving, sewing, velvety, embroidery, sculpture, braiding, 120 x 100 cm, 2019

Map #23
Wall hanging, jute fiber, hair, scraper, raffia fiber, aluminum, copper, resin, 200 x 300 cm, 2018–2021

Map # 28
Wall hanging, ceramic and textile, jute fiber, hair, scraper, raffia fiber, aluminum, copper, wax, resin, 90 cm x 190 cm, 2019–2021

In her works, Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien explores the links between traditional African practices, universalist thought, and the hybrid cultures that are her own: as a French woman from Ivory Coast, and more specifically from the Akan ethnic group, in the southeast of the country. Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien is a creator of links

between countries, generations, cultures, and materials – mixing in her works the natural and the industrial, as paired with the precious and the common, thus sublimating perspectives of the ordinary. The nature of the artist's works is plural, sometimes featuring cartographic or protective totems that take on the entanglements of sacred relics sheltering organic matter such as horsehair or strands of human hair, some of which are arranged in a way to evoke eyelashes, and thus, embodied presences.

Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien's maps are symbols, in the true sense of the word: representing what cannot be seen but inhabited by an emblem. If the object embodied is fluid, the presence of the body dwells within these works beyond any figuration. The materiality of the raffia, the presence of the hair, the matt surface of the clay heads, the brightness of the aluminum – each call to the senses, to the desire to touch, to decipher and encounter their hidden meanings. Within certain textiles are found or hidden poems, intensions, drawings, or expressions inspired by an Akan symbol made up of a double crocodile with two heads, two tails, and one body. This symbol translates the Ashanti proverb: “We have many mouths but we have only one belly.” It signifies the unity of the family, the group or the clan, encompassing the interests of each. Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien's works speak of a cosmic unity like an incantation. She writes: “I bind myself to the skies. I bind myself to the seas. I bind myself to the land. I am waters. I am woman. Man. That I love which agrees with the asters of all the carnal mass of its diverse body.”

M A R I E - C L A I R E M E S S O U M A
M A N L A N B I E N , born to an Ivorian father and a Guadeloupean mother, grew up between Abidjan and Paris where she currently lives and works. Trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Cergy, Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien has developed an ambitious, sensitive, and polymorphous personal practice. She is a creator of new forms, an explorer of materials and signs, and defines herself as a storyteller of poems. Like labyrinths or puzzles, her works compose new topographies around the themes of femininity, as bridged with identity and the body, located at the crossroads of her Caribbean and West African heritage. The artist's works, between sculpture, weaving and installation, offer us the possibility of navigating the meanders of their poetic narratives, of losing the landmarks that have been bequeathed to us in order to (re) draw paths of life that are our own.

Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien's work has been presented in several solo exhibitions, notably at the Orangerie du Jardin du Luxembourg in 2021, in an exhibition entitled *Weaving the Worlds*. The artist has also participated in numerous group exhibitions, such as recently at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, the MOCA Brescia in Italy, the MAC VAL and the A/D/O Design Institute in New York. In 2021, Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien is the winner of the 3rd edition of the 1% Art Market with her project *Ofi Titi*.

06 W A L T E R R O D N E Y
Crisis in the Periphery Africa and the Caribbean
Lecture, 1978

In the exhibition, we feature Walter Rodney's lecture, given in 1978, in which he turns his attention to the environment and the complex interrelationship between human society, production, and the protection of nature. He cites the revelations that Egypt's then president, Anwar el-Sadat, had been in France and Austria negotiating the export of their nuclear waste to Egypt. In this one hour lecture, many potent reflections and critiques are made that still hold dire resonance today.

He asserts: “We know, those of us who are familiar with the pattern of life in this society, that capitalism in its drive for profit maximisation has been totally oblivious of the effects on the environment. We know that capitalism has been killing the environment in the process of expanding capital. But the alienation which this has produced in the capitalist countries has at least sparked off the ecological movements, and now there is some resistance to the wanton development.”

07 T H E V I C T O R J A R A C O L L E C T I V E
The Terror and the Time
Film, 75 mins, 1978

In the Sky's Wild Noise
Film, 29 mins, 1983

The Terror and the Time
In 1953, what was then known as British Guiana elected its first “internal self government” under colonial rule. Nervous about the government's progressive programs and supposedly Soviet influence, the British suspended the constitution, jailed the democratically elected leaders, and staged a military invasion. Made in 1978, *The Terror and the Time* is an incendiary piece of agitprop documentary filmmaking that revisits the events of that seminal year in Guyanese history. Set to a series of poems by the great poet Martin Carter, and against the backdrop of the cold war and events of 1953 in such places as Iran, Guatemala, Kenya, and the US, this film (the first of only two works by the Victor Jara Collective) was banned by Guyana's government, and has rarely been screened since it was made.

In the Sky's Wild Noise is based around an interview with Walter Rodney. The interview - which was filmed in 1976, when the Victor Jara Collective was shooting their first documentary, *The Terror and The Time* - is intercut with archival footage, and explores the political, social, and economic conditions of the working class in Guyana in the 1970s.

T H E V I C T O R J A R A C O L L E C T I V E was named in honor of the Chilean musician and dissident Victor Jara, who was murdered by the Pinochet regime in 1973, and influenced by the politically committed New Latin American cinema of the 1960s. The collective formed with the intention of making formally daring films that investigated Guyana's own political, social, and economic struggles as an emergent postcolonial nation.

08 M U N E M W A S I F
Seeds Shall Set Us Free II
Cyanotypes prints, inkjet prints, archival documents, photographic reproductions of drawings, dimensions variable, 2017–2019

Munem Wasif seeks to reimagine an indigenous “ecosophical” mode of agriculture, where grain is a companion species to humanity: having names, deities, and spirits, around which the village organizes itself. He investigates the cultural history of grain, connected to memories of the 1944 Bengal famine, caused by hoarding for British troops.

Seeds Shall Set Us Free is a series of cyanotype prints of rice seeds, referencing at once scientific representation and alpona, the Bengali practice of creating ritual floor paintings using rice paste. Wasif juxtaposes his cyanotypes of rice grains and plants with archive documents and photographs from one of the largest community grain banks (Nayakrishi Andolon) in the country.

The artist excavates layers of ecological colonialism from the destruction of agricultural ecologies with the introduction of plantation farming and cash crops.

M U N E M W A S I F 's image-based works explore the notion of traces in their varied forms. His complex installations often mix photographs with moving images, archive documents, or collected paraphernalia to reveal notions of impermanence and insecurity. Never exhaustive and always open to interpretation, the narratives developed simultaneously test the limits of documentary representation and the possibilities of fiction.

Spurred by an awareness of current challenges, Wasif investigates topics that often resonate in global conversations. His working methodology based on long-term immersion, close contact with his subjects and systematic repetition conveys layered, sensitive, and sometimes contradictory observations on complex issues such as food sovereignty, labour exploitation or borders and migration.

Wasif's work has been included in exhibitions at the Center Pompidou, the Palais de Tokyo & the Visa pour l'image festival in France, at the Whitechapel Gallery, the Kettle's Yard and the Victoria & Albert Museum in England, at the Museu d'Art Contemporain in Spain, at

the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire & Fotomuseum Winterthur in Switzerland, at the Kunsthal Museum & Noordlicht Festival in Netherlands, at the Museum of Modern Art in Poland, at Parasite in Hong Kong, The Factory Contemporary Arts Centre in Vietnam, Gwangju Biennale in Korea, Singapore Biennale in Singapore, Sharjah Biennale, Art Jameel and Ishara Art Foundation in UAE, Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in Australia, and Dhaka Art Summit & Chobi Mela in Bangladesh.

Wasif was a Fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Germany (2020–2021). He was a regular curator for the Chobi Mela International Festival of Photography (editions VIII to X).

09 JESS ATIENO

TRANCE I

Woven tapestry, cotton yarn, 90 x 140 cm, 2022

TRANCE II

Woven tapestry, cotton yarn, 90 x 140 cm, 2022

TANGENTS OF PLACE

Woven tapestry, cotton yarn, 90 x 140 cm, 2022

All works belong to the series A Place Without A Name

“The critical historian must proceed on the basis of the realization that she has to invent a language adequate to the representation of historical reality for her own time and place of work.” Hayden White

Through the lens of the colonial past, Jess Atieno maps here a representation of what it means to belong to a place. Appropriating archival photographs, Atieno invokes and explores the symbolic power of the flag as a means to understand and question how we have come to represent ideas of belonging today. Further employing gestures of fragmentation through collage, she makes a proposition that questions the historical foundations of such representations: a foundation that continues to inform our senses of identity, citizenship, and age. Through the powerful act of deconstructing the flag, she tells the stories of potent symbols of our collective and individual agency, inviting us to think carefully about how we negotiate and envision alternative ways of representing agency.

JESS ATIENO is a Kenyan artist whose practice is informed by inquiries on place, home, and dispossession through the lens of the post-colonial. Atieno sees herself as carrying inscriptions of a colonial past and studying as an adult in the U.S., which made her increasingly unable to situate herself in a static reality of belonging. With this inspiration, she time travels into history through its material remains: journeying into historical photographs and maps and documents, employing them in prints, installations,

and tapestries. She turns to the idea of place as the transformative site of hybridity that offers alternative strategies for, and models of, representation within the post-colonial.

Atieno holds an MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is an alum of Asiko Art School. Her work has been shown in Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Angola, Austria, Germany, Ivory Coast, and the United States. Atieno is also the founder of the Nairobi Print Project.

10 JEAN KATAMBAYI MUKENDI

Tentacles

Drawing, ballpoint ink on Bristol paper with black wood frame, 100 x 70 cm, 2022

An electrical engineer by training, Jean Katambayi Mukendi studied mathematics before making art. His drawing *Tentacles* is full with diagrammatic grids made with the assistance of a ruler and compass; filaments and wires depict a chimerical lightbulb referring to raw materials unearthed in Lubumbashi, DRC's mining capital and a hub for some of the world's largest copper and cobalt interests. These raw materials are used to power the world, even as Lubumbashi's residents suffer regular blackouts.

In this piece, Mukendi confronts the machinations of global capital which produce uneven development and neocolonial dependencies on local and hemispheric scales. He examines infrastructures and apparatuses that ask us to reflect critically on the trappings of “development and progress” that lie in the hands of western imperialist networks and fabrics. Mukendi writes: “We live in a modality where the volatility of socio-economic parameters takes on an aesthetic character. A tentacular body [thus] emerges, as portrayed in this arolampe. Arolampes exist, [to indicate] that the African continent still has trouble controlling its economy and vital energies”.

JEAN KATAMBAYI MUKENDI lives and works in Lubumbashi, DRC. Trained as an electrician, his entire artistic practice is imbued with his fascination for mathematics, engineering, geometry, and technology. Profoundly marked by his upbringing in the workers' camp of his mining hometown and by its mechanisation, Katambayi creates fragile and complex installations and drawings inspired by sophisticated electrical circuits and technological studies. His works are part of a search for solutions to social problems in current Congolese society, as well as to the country's depletion of its enormous energetic resources. Often made of recycled and impermanent materials, such as cardboard and recycled electronic material, the artist's poetic pieces attempt to redress the imbalance of the world's hemispheres.

11 KARACHI LAJAMIA

The Gadap Sessions

Text, photographs, video excerpts, 2017–2018

Hamara Syal Rishtay

Zines, photographs, video, 2021

Stateless Study

Text document, 2016–2022

The compilation is a selection of research and pedagogical materials from various Karachi LaJamia courses and projects over the years, that examine emerging landscapes at the intersection of development, militarisation, and climate change in Pakistan. Their collective, interdisciplinary research and fieldwork processes envision study as a form of sociality, as a practice for remembering, and as a method for undoing and unlearning the state.

Against all the ways in which the university is mobilised as a site for building, imagining, and perpetuating false myths and erasures of the military-state, we practice and experiment with pedagogical methods to uncover and destabilise the violence of the nation-building project. This installation showcases Karachi LaJamia's interdisciplinary practice, working across multiple media and multiple ways of knowing, against hierarchies of form and knowledge to study, to witness, and to connect.

Gadap Sessions: A 6-month long course in collaboration with the Karachi Indigenous Rights Alliance as they resist the capture of their ancient settlement Gadap by real estate mega developers Bahria Town.

Hamare Siyal Rishte: A series of workshops organized in collaboration with Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum and Indigenous Rights Alliance, in the aquatic landscapes of Karachi where environmental defense and resistance is an ancient and ongoing pedagogy.

Texts and writings: A selection of writings and research reflecting on the pervasive culture of surveillance and securitisation in the realms of cultural and knowledge production in Pakistan.

KARACHI LAJAMIA is an anti-institution based in Karachi seeking to collectively explore new radical pedagogies and art practices. It is a nomadic space moving outside the institution to occupy public spaces in the city as sites of study: disrupting imperial modes of knowledge production and circulation.

Karachi LaJamia attempts to make sense of the new military-state apparatus in neo-colonial times, and what it means to produce and disseminate knowledge within it, in order to better understand and imagine possibilities and strategies of resistance. Their sessions

move between different sites and public spaces to allow relative freedom and fluidity to engage in political critique, and to collectively explore possibilities for solidarity and the politicisation of art in the institution and the city. They propose community approaches to research and pedagogy as slow, relational practices of connection, collaboration, and care, while working closely with multiple organisations and activists to build solidarity and alliances with ongoing struggles in the city.

Karachi LaJamia was founded by Shahana Rajani and Zahra Malkani in 2015.

12 SOFIA GALLISÁ MURIENTE &

NATALIA LASSALLE MORILLO

Foreign in a Domestic Sense

4-channel installation with sound, 4k, Hi8 and HD video with hand developed Super8 film, 32 mins, 2021

Foreign in a Domestic Sense is a constellation of testimonies and imaginaries of Puerto Ricans who have migrated to Central Florida in recent years, conjured by visual artists Natalia Lassalle-Morillo and Sofía Gallisá Muriente. Their images evoke, accompany, and connect the lived experiences of people who are part of the fastest-growing Puerto Rican population in the United States, as a result of political and environmental disasters in the archipelago. Just as the continuous states of emergency unsettle space and time, the artists explore visual languages rooted in the context of Florida to converse with such fragmentations, while building a choir of people, places, memories, and experiences.

The four channel film layers fictional and non-fictional narrative forms in video and Super8 film, speculating about how community is created through performance and recreation. Staging a dance floor in the darkness of a swamp, the artists envision a space where their cast members can find each other and learn to move freely. As the ubiquitous presence of water in times of rising tides suggests that Florida will soon become an island, the film addresses the entanglement between climate grief and human displacement. The title refers to the oxymoron used by the United States Supreme Court in 1901 as part of the ruling that gave legal sanction to the US colonization of foreign territories, identifying Puerto Rico as an unincorporated possession and speaking to a uniquely strange relationship to belonging.

SOFÍA GALLISÁ MURIENTE is a Puerto Rican visual artist whose work resists colonial erasures and reclaims the freedom of historical agency, proposing mechanisms for remembering and reimagining. Through multiple approaches to documentation and a collaborative research-based practice, she deepens the subjectivity of historical narratives and contests dominant visual cultures. Sofía employs texts, images, and archives as mediums

and subjects, exploring their poetic and political implications. She has been a fellow of the Smithsonian Institute, the Cisneros Institute at MoMA, the Puerto Rican Arts Initiative, the Flaherty Seminar, and the Annenberg Media Lab at USC, as well as participating in residencies such as Alice Yard (Trinidad & Tobago), FAARA (Uruguay), and Fonderie Darling (Montreal). Her work has been exhibited in Documenta 15, the Whitney Biennial, the Queens Museum, ifa Galerie in Berlin, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico, and galleries like Km 0.2 and Embajada. From 2014 to 2020, she co-directed the artist-run organization Beta-Local, dedicated to fostering knowledge exchange and transdisciplinary practices.

NATALIA LASSALLE - MORILLO is a theater artist, filmmaker, performer, and visual artist whose work reconstructs history through a transdisciplinary approach to research, form, and narrative. Melding theatrical performance, intuitive experimental ethnography, and collaborations with non-professional performers. Natalia's practice centers on excavating imagined and archived histories, decentralizing canonical narratives through embodied reenactments, and challenging the prioritization of written history by foregrounding instead the creation of new mythologies. She understands filmmaking not as truth telling, but as exploring the medium's relationship to theater, where every person plays a part in making a story. By bringing the practice of theater into the camera, Lassalle-Morillo presents a filmmaking methodology that creates its own decolonial rhythms, disrupting Western linear notions of time.

She earned an MFA in Theatre Directing from California Institute of the Arts and a BFA in Drama from the Experimental Theatre Wing at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Residencies and fellowships include: Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship (Washington DC, 2022), Amant Foundation (NY, 2022), Mass Moca Studio Residency, (North Adams, 2022), Fonderie Darling (Montréal, 2016), Miami Light Project (Florida), Beta-Local (Puerto Rico), and Konvent in Catalonia (Spain). Her work is part of the KADIST collection, and her films and performances have been presented at the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago, Museo Cabañas (Guadalajara, MX), TEA Espacio de las Artes en Tenerife (Canary Islands), SeMa (Seoul, Korea), The Flaherty Seminar, USF Contemporary Art Museum (Tampa), Walt Disney Modular Theatre in California, among other venues, festivals and performance venues internationally. Her work has been supported by NALAC, Foundation of Contemporary Arts, CalArts Center for New Performance, and the Puerto Rican Institute of Culture. She teaches Film at MICA (Baltimore) and Interdisciplinary Performance at the Bard Microcollege.

13 S È N A M I D O N O U M A S S O U

Fà gbésisà

Series of 16 photograms, silver barium paper, 17,8 x 12,7 cm, 2022

Fà gbésisà – allegories, incantatory words or proverbs enunciated that embody the knowledges inherent in the Fà. As divinatory art, the Fà – the orginary of Ilé Ifè in the former Kingdom of Oyo (Nigeria) – occupies an important place in most cultures of the peoples of Benin. Beyond its divinatory aspect, the Fà exists in different forms of literatures that are essentially Fà Gbésisà, the Fàgléta (tales related to the signs of the Fà) and the Fàhan (songs that unfold the history of the signs of the Fà).

Through a format oscillating between tarot cards and polaroid, the artist highlights the similarities and dissimilarities of two mancies: geomancy (the Fà) and cartomancy, two divinatory arts practiced in various cultures.

The series *Fà gbésisà* presents artworks that echo the noemes, allegories, of the sixteen main signs of Fà.

S È N A M I D O N O U M A S S O U is a visual artist who explores the notions of identity, heritage, and history that run through her artistic practice. She experiments through her creations, oscillating between photograms, protean installations, and drawings: trailing the scope of the technical and poetic potentialities of light.

14 R A J Y A S H R I G O O D Y

Writing Recipes

A5 paper booklets, 2016–ongoing

Deeksha

Photographs, paper, porcelain, clay slip, 2022–ongoing

Exploring the politics of the written word, cookbooks, and access to food resources in the context of Dalit communities in India, this series of booklets traces Dalit writers' memories and histories of foodways in texts. By picking extracts that discuss food (or the lack of it) in Dalit autobiographies, these words are converted into second-person accounts, deconstructed and broken down to resemble a hybrid moving between recipe instructions and poetry.

Deeksha is a reflection on both the private and socio-political impact of religious conversions. It is a celebration of 14th October, Dhammachakra Pravartan Diwas, when Dr. Ambedkar, along with hundreds of thousands of Dalit people, left the caste system inherent to Hinduism and converted to Buddhism in 1956. It is also an introspection of the artist's own private and familial relationship to Buddhist practice that is rooted in Ambedkarite thought.

This work is presented in two parts: the first is composed of photographs taken by the artist in 2017 during their community's annual pilgrimage in Nagpur to Deekshabhoomi, fired into paper porcelain. The paper used in the paper porcelain is that of the *Manusmriti*, a discriminatory law book dated back to 3500 BC. The second part is comprised of 22 vows painted on the wall with clay slip, extracted and gathered together from Dalit literature, inspired by the 22 vows that Dr. Ambedkar took when he converted to Buddhism.

R A J Y A S H R I G O O D Y is from Pune, India. Her artistic practice is informed by her academic background in sociology and visual anthropology, as well as her Dalit roots. Dalit people have been treated as untouchable and impure for thousands of years, and many are still denied basic rights to land, food, water, and literacy. Goody is interested in how the caste system has been challenged by her family and larger community, and the cultivation of self-respect, confidence, and dignity as a personal and collective practice. Her work highlights how Dalit identity is being reclaimed and reinvented today through acts of everyday resistance, such as going to school, drinking water from public wells, falling in love, sharing a meal, rejecting Hinduism, and converting to other religions.

Dalit literary and photo archives are the backbone of Goody's research. These sources of history making are particularly significant because access to these tools of documentation only opened up to her community in the 20th century. She builds upon this research with writing of her own, as well as sculptures made of ceramics and paper. She sees these materials as active carriers of a history that allows her to tap into a deeper understanding of what it means for her to be Dalit.

15 W A L L E N M A P O N D E R A

Chirukwa

Installation, 2022

Wallen Mapondera's work speaks about consumerism: what we eat builds us. Wood becomes interwoven with cardboard from a wholesale market selling groceries. As there is limited agricultural production in Zimbabwe, a primary question comes to the foreground: where do local Zimbabweans and people throughout the continent receive basic commodities? Beyond food, do the majority of our needed medications come from our former colonizers and their specters? As a central example, the continent and much of the Global South have been forced into a dependency on western and European donors for COVID vaccinations. This highlights the structural imbalances and residual power dynamics that continue to pervade much of the world outside of the west: disabling the adequacy of science and expertise that is located within.

W A L L E N M A P O N D E R A graduated from Zimbabwe's National Gallery School in 2007 and attended the Chinhoyi University of Technology in 2008 but, due to political instability, could not complete his studies. Since then, he graduated with a Masters degree in fine arts in 2019 at Rhodes University in South Africa and has sustained an independent artistic practice in Zimbabwe. In 2015, he co-founded Post Studio Arts Collective, a visual arts group that works toward the acknowledgement of visual art as an important aspect of education, spreading awareness through classes, exhibitions and workshops hosted by both practicing visual artists and academics in the art world, including lecturers, curators and art critics.

16 A N N A M A P O U B I

Série Nyambéisme (ongoing)

12 Drawings, colored pencils, inks, pens, acrylics on paper, 2018–2022

Nyambéisme Series invokes the rich and hybrid spiritualities of Mbok Nyambéism of the Bassa people of Cameroon which lived long past the periods of colonization, and continue to breathe their visions of worldmaking upon its regions and communities. Mapoubi's works channel her intimate encounters with the learnings of the Nyambe or Nyambê, manifest as a tabular montage of drawings speaking towards the eternal power of the reigns of the cosmos that moves without beginning and end. With all its wisdom, force, and beauty, Mapoubi's work crosses boundaries and categories in the journey through Nyambéisme spiritualities, as their ancestral lengths merge with currents of the new.

In Cameroon, the Bassa peoples have experienced a specific branch of Nyambéism called Mbok, whose existence is marked by a deep will to understand the marks, folds, and scars caused by the visible or the real.

As knowledge is often transmitted through oration, earthly presence as it relates to society, death, nature, and tradition, Nyambéisme helps Mapoubi to understand different sensory perceptions: of the expression of desires, of emotions, and forms of orientation and morphologies of emotions and passions. For many scientists and literary scholars, Nyambéisme is a broad teaching which carries in its tabular analysis and poetics many dispersals of fragmented messages, embodied by images and sounds.

At the crossroads of several knowledges and open to literature, psychoanalysis, psychology, and all that can be generated by various disciplines, Mapoubi loudly declares the poetics of Nyambeism can extend to infinity in its vertiginous correspondences. Mapoubi's centering of Nyambéisme introduces us to the constitutive paradox of images, which serve as a type of theater where heterogeneous realities conjoin.

She cries out with voices of friends: "POETICS" - "FREEDOM" - "COMPOSITION" - MONTAGE" - "IS-WAS-WILL BE" - "WE ARE-WERE-WILL BE". A plurality of other descriptions rain down without being pinned to a solid ground. It is there that we can understand the images in a beyond, which is simultaneously always apparent: as a ghost that is present or imminent, but above all, latent. It is there that anything can be birthed at any given moment, as a symptom of a song, as in a tale or a story, as in gestures of a dancer. Each of us has inherited a story, a force of life that resists death: because each of us is life itself.

Our images follow us all our existence, and even when we are no longer there, our presence is buried in the other, our followings hover in the air.

A N N A M A P O U B I lives and works between Douala and Saint-Etienne, where she studied plastic arts, design, music, and art sciences. A multidisciplinary artist, her creations are full of poetry. By mixing various techniques such as drawing, collage, folding or weaving, Anna Mapoubi refuses any compartmentalization between practice and theory: inviting us to go beyond the borders, to gather and assemble what is scattered. Anna Mapoubi participated in 2016 in the Dak'art Biennale and the Summer Festival at Villa Ada in Rome, in the OFF of the Venice Biennale 2017 – Art and Globalization – as well as the OFF of the Venice Biennale 2019 – GAD – Giudecca Art District. In 2021, she presented her exhibition *Fluide fou* at the MAM Gallery.

17 S I M N I K I W E B U H L U N G U
Berlin 2 Berlin
Sound Installation, 25:55 mins, 2020

An audio guide detailing the directions from Berlin (Not this one! That one!) to Berlin (Not that one! This one!) using Google Maps' step-by step directions for – ideally – a vehicle.

While this form borrows from the structure of audible GPS directions, it is more of a mobile historical narrative[s], of how one site in the Northern Hemisphere (Germany) and its colonial-namesake located in the Southern Hemisphere (South Africa) are cyclical points which chart the cultural and historical landscapes of various geographies. Names of roads and streets, the absence or presence of toll roads; whether there are landmarks or amenities as indicators of vicinities nearby; the [collapse of] measuring space and time and the route that GPS gives to you in assumption that, “there were no stops, no necessary visa applications, favourable [to us] socio-political, cultural and historical stabilities, infinite mobilities, infrastructural and architectural favourabilities, or limitations to access and

economic capital.”

S I M N I K I W E B U H L U N G U is an artist from Johannesburg, South Africa, interested in knowledge production[s] and dissemination. Buhlungu locates socio-historical and everyday phenomena by navigating these questions and their inexhaustible possible answers. Through this, she maps points of cognisance, i.e. “how do we come to know?”, in four and a half moments – namely: a lost wallet, a Khuaya, honey bees, a library, and a puddle (that's the half) – which situate various layers of awareness as syncopated and reverberated ecologies.

Lately, she has been listening to trees rustling, thinking about apiaries, and scanned publication contributions to Simunye Resource Works, a publishing house that is forever yet-to-exist.

18 S Y O W I A K Y A M B I
1964–2018
Kaunda suits, boards, lighting, 250 x 45 cm, 2018

The Kaunda suit represents how ideologies shift over time and how identities change. Syowia Kyambi is interested in how the Kaunda suits serve as a uniform representing ideas around the independence era on the African continent. They stood as an expression of freedom and the capacity of being able to be an entrepreneur. They stood as a way for citizens to share their roots with the working class, and a way for presidents to say that they are part of, and together with, their people. The Kaunda suit was a powerful symbol that spoke of leanings toward socialistic ideologies. It was a way of stating, “Here I am! I am free! Here I am, and I am my own person! Here I am, and I am my own country now. Here I am, I am with my own people now. I am together with my people!”

The name Kaunda suit was coined after Kenneth Kaunda, the first president fo Zambia, which gained independence in 1964. Several African countries gained their independence in the 1960s. Many of the first presidents in Africa wore this suit as a symbol. It was a move by the presidents to show solidarity with the population. Many men from this generation (of the 60s, 70s, and 80s) who possessed a grey colored Kaunda suit, have given their suit away or very rarely have kept one. If they have, it is in the cupboard, tucked away. You'll now find the grey version of this suit as a uniform of employment.

Recently, employees of shopkeepers in downtown Nairobi wear it, and it has become a bus driver's uniform for private schools. The surviving versions of the Kaunda suits have become fancier, and have started to follow in influences of western fashion. The suit of the 60s as worn by icons of the independent era such as Sam Nujoma, Julius Nyerere, and Kenneth Kaunda,

push a vision of solidarity with the working-class and a selfhood away from Western thought. This ideology of the suit has now shifted its power dynamics, from those depicting an independent African man, back to a space of servitude. This runs counter to the shift in ideology on the continent post-independence: as a shift away from socialism and towards capitalism. For Syowia Kwambi, the suit reflects this transition and invites us to confront the layers of history embedded within it.

S Y O W I A K Y A M B I is an interdisciplinary artist and curator who works across photography, video, drawing, sound, sculpture and performance installation. She holds an MFA from Transart Institute, accredited by the University of Plymouth (2020), and a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2002). In Kyambi's artistic practice history collapses into the contemporary through the interventions of mischievous and disruptive interlocutory agents who interrogate the legacy of hurt inflicted by colonial projects that still frame the wider political conjuncture of our contemporary times. Her approach takes aim at the politics of now and its impacts on our daily lives. What is remembered, what is archived, and how we see the world anew. The work is complex and uneasy, requiring its viewers and participants to bear witness to an embodiment of collective experiences. Kyambi is in constant search for alternative methodologies to assist her in navigating the conundrum of our lived experiences in order to create the potentiality for alternative futures. She opens her gullet like a pelican in an effort to ingest the intangible.

19 K U M A R I R A N J E E T A
Beyond the Line II
Paintings, watercolor, sequins, and old cotton saree on paper, 2022

These paintings are a series within the larger project *Poetry of Resistance: Domesticity and the World*.

Labor and margins. Kumari Ranjeeta explores the essence of the gaps between dreams and reality, as well as the spaces between domesticity and social landscapes concerned with women living in the margins. Through visual experimentation, she traces an aesthetic from these perspectives to understand their expanses of desire, hope, and struggle.

During her research, the plays and songs of Bhikhari Thakur influenced her work with their depictions of the evils that were corroding with society. Inspired by Thakur's work, Ranjeeta realized she wanted to speak towards domestic acts of women and their broad relationships, taking elements from daily life to represent their stories, such as their vibrant, colorful attire, the sari, and objects of the household. Bihari women use sarees, in many ways beyond the act of draping, such as in the Sujani: a traditional art form made of old sarees for newborn babies, where expanded forms of storytelling are then created.

The series tells the tale of domestic women's labour from Ranjeeta's homeland and the history of migrant families left to fend for themselves. Old, worn-out saris collected from the women of her neighbourhood and family invoke representational portraits, imbued by the underlying presences of women singing traditional songs at home through these everyday household activities. Below the work's surfaces are songs about the hardships of and solidarity among women. Like their colourful saris, all is not grey in their songs. Under the veil of folk songs are acts of shared sorrows, angers, and joys. Within the series, the poetry of their lives and their stories of resistance ascend. The work examines how a domestic act can be transformed into a generative act of defiance, nourished by the many folk tales and songs that express untold stories.

R A N J E E T A K U M A R I was born and brought up in Bihar, India. Currently, she lives in and works in Patna and Bombay India. Kumari is a visual artist whose practice is anchored in visual experiments through which she explores the aesthetics of labour, displacement, and migration. Using mixed media watercolor painting, photography, found objects, and installations, her concern is to create a visual identity of the marginalised.

She received her BA in painting from the College of Arts and Crafts, Patna, India, in 2008. She then moved to Delhi with a junior fellowship awarded by the Government of India. In 2016, she graduated with a Masters in Fine Art (Research Programme) from the School of Humanities and Social Science, Shiv Nadar University, India.

Selected solo exhibitions include: *Labour of the Unseen – Nihilism in Craft; River with a Thousand Holes; Guadeloupe Oriental*, at Clark House Clark House Initiative, Bombay; and *Stories My Country Told Me*, ACC, Gwangju, South Korea. Kumari has additionally shown at many national and international group exhibitions.

20 E M O D E M E D E I R O S
Kaleta/Kaleta (an excerpt)
Video, three channel, unlimited, 2014–2017

A multidimensional and transmedia piece, *Kaleta/Kaleta* incorporates music and digital video processed in real time, melding performance with a reconfigurable multi-screen performative installation inducing public participation. With 512 videos that are recombined in a video piece that never ends, transcultural hybridizations caused by globalization bring made-in-China opera masks from Beijing to Benin link digitization and technological multiplicities with an aesthetics of contexture.

The word “Kaleta” refers to a tradition invented in Benin by

Afro-Brazilians, echoing in Ouidah during the nineteenth century. It is a unique mix of Brazilian carnival, American Halloween, and Beninese mask traditions of the Zangbeto. Kaleta is performed by young boys gathered in small bands during the period between Christmas and New Year: they go from house to house, dancing and playing makeshift instruments in exchange for small tips. The musicians never wear masks, and their percussive instruments are generally made out of reused materials such as cans, bottles, pieces of metal, etc. The dancers are always masked and never talk; they communicate only through gestures and respond individually and collectively to the name of “Kaleta”.

The performative installation *Kaleta/Kaleta* permanently and autonomously generates, like a digital Kaleta band, performances with always different recombinations of semantic elements from the visual to the auditory and gestural. It also forms an immersive environment that invites the public within the installation to transform into actors. Video and audio motifs recombine, endlessly producing always different performances playing along a fixed tempo of 133 bpm.

Kaleta/Kaleta remixes a uniquely Beninese historical tradition through digital media and technologies, forming a synthesis between memory and vision, past and future, conservation and creation.

E M O D E M E D E I R O S is a Beninese-French artist living and working in Cotonou (Benin) and in Paris (France). His work has been shown internationally, in France (Centre Pompidou, Palais de Tokyo), Germany (MARKK Hamburg), Brazil (Videobrasil Contemporary Art Festival São Paulo), Nigeria (LagosPhoto), United Kingdom, Japan, China, in the biennales of Marrakech, Dakar and Casablanca. His practice hinges on a single concept he calls contexture, a fusion of the digital and the material, of the tangible and the intangible, exploring hybridizations, interconnections and circulations of forms, technologies, traditions, myths and merchandises.

He investigates the new perspectives and conversations happening in a novel space: the current context of the post-colonial, globalized and digitalized world of the early 21st century. The focus of his research encompasses transcultural spaces and the questioning of traditional notions of origin, locus or identity and their mutations through non-linear narratives. Emo de Medeiros' artworks always include a salient conceptual dimension, and are characterized by a participatory and rhythmic approach fusing traditional, technological and semiological elements in transmedia forms. Within his practice, Emo de Medeiros employs an array of media including drawing, sculpture, text, video, photography, assemblage, performance, electronic music, installations, painting and appliqué fabric.

21 **S H E I L A C H U K W U L O Z I E**

Ugonachomma, Mmma na cho Ugo
Video, 2:09 mins, 2019

Young lady, you are: A mirror that must not go out in the sun
A child that must not be touched by dew
One that is dressed up in hair
A lamp with which people find their way
An eagle feather worn by a husband
A straight line drawn by God
Romanus Egudu and Donatus Nwoga, eds., *Igbo Traditional Verse* (London; Heinemann, 1973), p. 20.

Ugonachomma, Mmma na cho Ugo is an experimental installation that explores the question behind the question: “If I am beautiful is it because I am Igbo?”, or “If I am beautiful is it despite the fact that I am Igbo?” It traverses the English word “monstrous” while juxtaposing an ancient Igbo figurine alongside it, held as an epitome of beauty. It is a question, asking if the English word “beauty” can hold the artist’s non-English self to the light of its constructions of presumed, or enforced, descriptions of “beauty”. If it cannot, how can the English word “monstrous” hold an embraceable darkness?

S H E I L A C H I A M A K A C H U K W U L O Z I E is a performance artist, writer, filmmaker, and teamaker. She believes in the power of sensation through the individual body to regenerate healing in the communal body: including the wisdom of the body when recognizing the wisdom of the self. Her work has been included in exhibitions at the Musée d’Art Moderne in Paris, the Delfina Foundation in London, and in art spaces and festivals across three continents. From 2017–2018, she traveled as a Thomas J. Watson fellow studying with traditional mask makers and cloth weavers in eight African countries. Her installation *Thanks Xenophobia* was widely reviewed, including in *Frieze*, the *Financial Times*, and *Artnet*. Her latest film *Egungun* (directed by Olive Nwosu) was presented at Sundance, the British Film Institute, TIFF International film festival, and Aspen film festival.

22 **G U Y W O U E T É**
Corridor
Video, HD video 16/9, single channel projection loop, colour, sound/noises, 10:45 mins, 2010

Corridor is the result of a research trip to three refugee camps in Malta (Balzan, Marsa, and Hal Far). The film refers to the brutal Darwinism inherent in processes of migration.

The composition is based on a succession of video sequences and photos taken in the immigrant camps and the streets of Malta. It is articulated around a charismatic character named Ahmed, who has just been officially recognised as a political refugee, and slowly crosses a corridor. The movement of the camera

is an extension of Ahmed’s gaze and movements. In a fortnight, Ahmed would leave for the USA where a new life would begin for him. While still in the Balzan camp, the news he received from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Malta changes his life. Unlike his fellow refugees, he regained the dynamism of ordinary people.

Walking along the corridor, we enter a living space cluttered by the chaotic arrangement of things in a transitory atmosphere. We understand that the room is overcrowded and that the aging, degraded, and unhealthy site holds beds on the floor, a semblance of cobbled-together wardrobes, and suitcases laid out here and there – each give a feeling of abandonment, of distant arrival and dreamed-of departure, still in progress. The pieces of tied-up clothes create a small intimacy between the occupants. The human presence in this space seems disturbing and absurd to the viewer. Always with the movement of the camera, we become voyeurs through our gaze lost in a moment, looking for an unlikely exit door.

In a slow dynamic of reversal, the closing sequence takes us back to the cluttered space where our travelers are now gathered around a large plate of rice. It is time for a “meal” and a hand gesture invites us to sit down on the floor. A close-up shows us, as in Vincent Van Gogh’s *Potato Eaters* (1885), fragments of tired, poorly lit faces, emaciated bodies, bent or squatting, hands that move back and forth between the plate of rice and the mouths.

G U Y W O U E T É is based between Douala and Antwerp where he works as a video artist, sculptor, and painter embracing installations and photography to create images following a conceptual approach. His body of work encompasses elements of social criticism and the question of immigration in the age of globalisation. He expresses: “For me, art is not an end, but an opportunity to observe and criticise the times we live in.” The history of his country plays a fundamental role in his work, and lived realities of the everyday are primary sources of inspiration. Woueté studied Fine Art and Multimedia at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam and has attended various workshops and residencies throughout the African continent and Europe.

UNRAVELING THE (UNDER) DEVELOPMENT COMPLEX OR TOWARDS A POST-(UNDER) DEVELOPMENT INTERDEPENDENCE

CONCEPT

BY BONAVENTURE
SOH BEJENG NDIKUNG

ANECDOTE I

Imagine there is a pandemic that has brought Europe and America – the epitome of the “developed world” to its knees. No, that’s too absurd a thing to imagine. Imagine it is a pandemic of global scale that has brought the whole world, not to its knees, but lying on its belly – an even more absurd imagination. Just imagine hundreds of filled up trucks in Italy and other countries carrying corpses of COVID victims in search of burial grounds for them. Imagine mass graves and burials in Central Park in NY. Imagine new strains of a mutated virus emanating from South Africa, the Amazonas, England and more. Imagine a world in lockdown struggling to contain a virus gone wild. And imagine the disbelief in the minds of people of the “developed world” who are used to seeing diseases ravage other places on TV and wondering in dismay: how could this happen to us? Imagine that when this all started, the catch slogan was #weareallinthisogether. We all marvelled at the sudden compassion, the care, the sudden sense of humanity, as people in North America, Europe, or Australia begged for the world to stay in solidarity. In the midst of disaster, in an extremely dire and precarious moment, there was no longer a separation between rich and poor, developed and underdeveloped, as the virus wasn’t ready to respect man-made borders or systems of classification. In the meanwhile African states like Madagascar had started developing possible medications against Covid that were not recognised by the “developed” WHO.¹ But then imagine that when there was suddenly a dim light at the end of the tunnel – one, then two and more vaccines were found – then came the old deep-rooted instincts of capitalist possession. Imagine the slogan of #weareallinthisogether crumbling in its parts and the word together was no longer to be found. It was about us first. The rich first. The “developed world” first. And whether the rest of the world gets vaccines is as secondary as it can be.

In a thoroughly researched broadcast on Deutschlandfunk radio written by Anne Demmer, Marc Engelhardt and Dunja Sadaqi with the title “Global

distribution of corona vaccine – Vaccine justice remains an illusion” (Globale Verteilung von Corona-Impfstoff – Impfgerechtigkeit bleibt eine Illusion), the authors elaborate on how the WHO’s plan to fairly distribute corona vaccinations globally has already failed before it even properly started.²

The “developed” countries have reserved for themselves a large part and are still fighting for even more vaccination doses, while the “underdeveloped” countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America are deprived of the possibility of inoculating their populations. It is worth remembering that when the debate on where, how and on whom to do the initial trials for a possible covid vaccine began sometime as the pandemic was declared, many a physician in France and other “developed” countries had proposed for the tests on possible vaccines to be done in Africa. In the radio feature “Global distribution of corona vaccine - Vaccine justice remains an illusion” the authors elaborate on how the WHO had prepared for a fair vaccine distribution by demanding all countries in the world to pay into a common fund named Covax with the intention of acquiring bundled vaccines for everyone. This WHO plan was shot down the drain as “developed” countries opted to make bilateral agreements that profited their nations. In the words of WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus: “While they speak of equitable access, some states prefer bilateral agreements with vaccine manufacturers. They try to push their way forward and thus drive prices up.” As a member of the Moroccan Covid-19 scientific committee, Azeddine Ibrahim, says in the article: “All the vaccine doses that are currently being produced have already been sold – because the Americans, the Europeans have bought more than they need. Most of the vaccines have been bought from rich countries.” And Azeddine Ibrahim went on to say “The more the virus can spread in Africa, the greater the risk that new virus variants will develop against which today’s vaccinations are not effective.” This is the basis of an overt vaccination inequality orchestrated along power lines, along the gradients of “developed” to “underdeveloped”.

¹ Madagascar slams WHO for not endorsing its herbal cure: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/madagascar-slams-who-for-not-endorsing-its-herbal-cure/1836905>
² Anne Demmer, Marc Engelhardt und Dunja Sadaqi: “Globale Verteilung von Corona-Impfstoff - Impfgerechtigkeit bleibt eine Illusion”, *Deutschlandfunk*, 02.02.2021, https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/globale-verteilung-von-corona-impfstoff-impfgerechtigkeit.724.de.html?dram:article_id=491870 (Accessed: 22.02.2021).

I tried to count them. I gave up at a hundred and something.

It wasn't even a whole night's trip. Just from 4am heading to Yaoundé from Douala. And on the way back I spared myself the trouble of counting.

But thousands of tree stems, timbers – some so big they wouldn't fit in the frame of my camera and even bigger than the jeep in which I sat – are abducted from the natural forests in Cameroon and transported by trucks directly to the port to be shipped from an “underdeveloped world” to a “developed world”. From which paper, furniture or otherwise are made and sold and sometimes even exported again to the “underdeveloped world” for horrendous prices. This exploitation of the natural rain forest – sometimes trees of 700 to 1000 years old – happens under the watchful eyes of complacent citizens who care more for a beer than a lost tree, and obviously in coalition with the too often corrupt governments in power that care more for their Swiss accounts than the wellbeing of their peoples, let alone the wellbeing of planet earth. According to the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (2018), almost 46% of Cameroon's total area consists of forests of which 0.1% is planted forest. According to timber trade portal, “forest land cover in Cameroon has declined for the last 25 years with a loss of around 1.0% forest cover per year, which is one of the highest deforestation rates in the Congo Basin.”³ Let's pause to acknowledge that these are the official figures, and imagine what the real situation is like.

According to Alison Hoare and the timber trade portal, “the main drivers of deforestation in Cameroon are (i) conversion to agriculture, from both large and medium-scale plantations, as well as smallholders, (ii) fuel-wood harvesting, (iii) mining and (iv) infrastructure development. Unsustainable and illegal logging is also to blame for the degradation of Cameroon's forests. Illegal logging has long been recognised as a significant problem in Cameroon. Concerns have been raised over the misuse of certain logging permits in the country, and the lack of effective regulation and law enforcement.”⁴ It goes without saying that the consequences of deforestation is not only catastrophic for the “underdeveloped world”, but the consequences also negate the partitioning of the world into “underdeveloped” and “developed” by manifesting its repercussions on a global scale. The echoes of the destruction of the Amazonas or the Tropical Rain Forests are heard in the North and South poles. Because of deforestation, there is a substantial loss of animal and plant species caused by the loss of their habitat. The rampant destruction of forests world-wide leads to an increase in the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, as a result of fewer trees to absorb carbon dioxide. Deforestation also means a deregulation of

the water cycle in the atmosphere, as much as it leads to soil erosion and flooding, and since the hosts and habitats of countless species, including viruses, are destroyed in the processes of deforestation, they do have to find new hosts.

Anecdotes I and II are connected for the obvious reasons stated by Jeff Tollefson in his paper “Why Deforestation and Extinctions Make Pandemics More Likely,” which showed that with deforestation some species become extinct, but those – like rats and bats – that survive have the tendency to carry dangerous pathogens to their new hosts: humans.⁵ As Peter Daszak, zoologist at the non-governmental organization EcoHealth Alliance, points out in the article, “most efforts to prevent the spread of new diseases tend to focus on vaccine development, early diagnosis and containment, but that's like treating the symptoms without addressing the underlying cause.”⁶

The other common denominator of anecdotes I and II is the question of, the myth of, the consequences of the categorisation of the world in “developed” and “underdeveloped”. If there was ever any person who profoundly understood the constructs of “development” vs “underdevelopment” and the machinations of the “developed” towards the “underdeveloped” to maintain each other at their places, if there was ever anyone who understood that the concepts of “development” and “underdevelopment” were ingrained in the logics of exploitation, profit, disenfranchisement and disprivileging then it was the seminal, revolutionary and visionary Guyanese activist, academic, historian and writer Walter Anthony Rodney (23 March 1942 – 13 June 1980) who published his seminal book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* in 1972.

This project is a commemoration of this fundamental piece of critical and enlightening writing, as well as a possibility for us to deliberate on a “post-(under) development” world.

U N D E R D E V E L O P M E N T
— D E V E L O P M E N T —
P O S T - D E V E L O P M E N T

To be born in a world labeled “underdeveloped” is to be born and then placed in a dilapidated coach. Not that being born in a cart is a problem, but if the horse meant to pull the coach is not only conditioned to be slow and inefficient but also tired and worn out, then the situation is what we call in West Africa “kataberre”. Even worse, there seems to be a race at stake. And the competitor in that race has not only set the rules and modalities, the playground and medium, but they are also the

referee. And by the way, the broken coach in which you find yourself was “gifted” to you by your competitor – in a gesture of “goodwill”. As if that is not enough, the competitor is in the comfort of an SSC Tuatara in the possession of 1750 horse powers. And again, as if that were still not enough, your opponent has placed themselves several miles ahead of you before the race begins.

But because your competitor is not only the one setting the rules of the game and cheating by putting themselves ahead, they are also in possession of the tools to inform the world that this situation is in fact a level playing field par excellence. All is just good. Plus, they have the sheer audacity to deprive your tired, hungry, maltreated horse of its last bucket of food, not because your competitor is hungry, but because they would prefer to use the food as bio fuel for their vehicle. In *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Walter Rodney doesn't only lay bear the disparity of this race that was never meant to be played on a level playing ground, but also debunks the denigrating and demeaning narratives perpetuated by the opponent that accompanied the exploitation and holding back that what was later to be called “underdeveloped”. He takes the reader on a historical exposé of the African continent before the Middle Passage, before the violent and inhumane machinations of the transatlantic slave enterprise. By pointing at a vast range of examples like the Kaffa cultivators, the Khoisan hunter-gatherers, the nomadic Fulani herdsmen or the Bozo fisherman, Rodney succeeded in elaborating on a vastness and richness of African civilisations that hardly featured in the books of those who claimed a dearth of civilisations and development in Africa. In pointing at the advanced artistic practices, technological sophistication and industrial prowess, architectural accomplishments found in places like Timbuktu with renowned centres of learning and universities of the 14th century and mosques that date back to the 10th century, or the kingdom of Benin with its bronze sculptures, or Fatimid dynasty with its industries that excelled in sugar refining, porcelain-crafting, metal-works, paper-, textiles-, or leather-making, or the monumental architecture and sociological structures of Great Zimbabwe, Rodney further proved that Africa was never a terra nullius. One can safely say that before the coming of the Europeans to what is now called the Americas, Asia, Australia and the African continent, there were a plethora of civilisations and developments that only began their demise with that encounter.

How Europe Underdeveloped Africa does not only reveal the material advancements prior to colonisation, but also elaborates on the complex sociocultural structures, some of which were not always good and perpetrated

hierarchies, class structures and exploitation. So, while Rodney identified the precocious innovations in the arts, culture, education and technology in Africa, he didn't fail to mention how powerful elites and the aristocratic class indulged in exploitations of the lower classes including domestic and chattel slaves. He points out in several ways that prior to the break of the transatlantic slave trade, Africa and Europe were at parr with each other in many ways – with African kings having honorary positions in European courts or became knights in European feudal society – and that parity was stalled by the transatlantic slave trade. Thanks to vicious weaponry like guns and shipping technology, and ideologies that allowed for the dehumanisation of people to attain profit, the slave enterprise became a catalyst that determined what would be developed and underdeveloped. This complex of a triangle meant eliminating millions of indigenous peoples in the Americas through varied forms of genocidal activities including diseases, acquiring indentured labourers and eventually enslaving African men, women and children.

“They engaged in buying cotton cloth in India to exchange for slaves in Africa to mine gold in Central and South America. Part of the gold in the Americas would then be used to purchase spices and silks from the Far East. The concept of metropole and dependency automatically came into existence when parts of Africa were caught up in the web of international commerce,” writes Rodney.⁷ The consequences were vital, and had an impact not only in the diminution of brains and labour force, but also in the stagnation of technology due to the imposed trades: “When European cloth became dominant on the African market, it meant that African producers were cut off from the increasing demand. The craft producers either abandoned their tasks or they continued on the same small hand-worked instruments to create styles and pieces for localized markets. Therefore there was what can be called “technological arrest” or stagnation or even regression. The abandonment of traditional iron smelting in most parts of Africa is probably the most important instance of technological repression.”⁸

Rodney's well researched and trenchant historical, sociological and socio-economic report also takes us through the institutionalisation of colonialism, the partitioning of peoples, the imposition of languages and destruction of knowledges and cultures, and how all these still have repercussions in the present moment of 1971/72, as much as the present moment of 2021/22. Rodney also takes us through the decolonial movements and era, and does not fail to call out the generation of African leaders who became accomplices with their former colonial rulers in the continuous exploitation of their citizens. Which is to say that the big promises of the “missions civilisatrice” that served as the “excuses” to colonise, as well as the hope or say the claim of colonisation as a means of bringing better education, modernity, technology, and eventually

³ Overview on *Timber Trade Portal*: <https://www.timbertradeportal.com/countries/cameroon> (Accessed 22.02.2021)

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Jeff Tollefson. “Why Deforestation and Extinctions Make Pandemics More Likely”, *Nature*, 07.08.2020: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02341-1> (Accessed 22.02.2021)

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Cape Town, Dakar, Nairobi, Oxford: Pambazuka Press 2012 (orig: 1972)), 76.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 216.

development never really materialised, except infrastructures like roads and railways that actually were built in the first place to facilitate the exportation of resources from the inlands to the coasts to be shipped to Europe and beyond, as we saw in Anecdote II. As Rodney puts it “in other words, capitalism in the form of colonialism failed to perform in Africa the tasks which it had performed in Europe in changing social relations and liberating the forces of production.”⁹

All the while, in the midst of exploiting and making shameless profits at the costs of people’s lives, the colonised societies were promised this was for their own good, for their freedom and that “free trade” was the solution to all the world’s problems. One is tempted to think of Mr Burnham’s answer to Raja Neel Rattan in Amitav Ghosh’s novel *Sea of Poppies* (2008): “The war, when it comes, will not be for opium. It will be for a principle: for freedom – for freedom of trade and for the freedom of the Chinese people. Free trade is a right conferred on man by God, and its principles apply as much to opium as to any other article of trade. More so, perhaps, since in its absence, many millions of natives would be denied the lasting advantages of British influence.”¹⁰ Mr Burnham went on to claim, quoting a friend, that “‘Jesus Christ is Free Trade and Free Trade is Jesus Christ.’ Truer words, I believe, were never spoken. If it is God’s will that opium be used as an instrument to open China to his teachings, then so be it.”¹¹

Which takes us literally and metaphorically to the notion of dependence in the complex of “development” and “underdevelopment”. Be it dependence on drugs, on currencies, on health facility support in times of crisis, dependence on market economy/trade and banking, political support or otherwise. It is this dependence that frames and guides the myths and constructs of “development” and “underdevelopment”.

As the dependency theorists around Raul Prebisch and others had already pointed out in the 1950s and beyond, to understand economic underdevelopment one needs to comprehend the dependencies on and constraints imposed by global economic and political structures. According to dependency theory, the world is divided into core countries, periphery of the core countries, core of the periphery countries, and periphery of the periphery countries. This division means also an international division of labour whereby the core countries are those fit to do the brain work, do research etc, while the periphery of the periphery countries are fit to do just cheap manual labour and provide the world market with raw materials — often enough produced by child labour under the most unacceptable conditions. These raw materials from the periphery countries are then treated and transformed in the core countries to finished goods, which are then resented to the periphery countries and sold for exorbitantly high prices, depleting the already low capital in these countries that was intended for their industries, health and social

systems and general infrastructures. This four step class distinction has the ultimate goal of exploiting the masses of the so-called “underdeveloped world” in a process of effectuating global capitalism. To put it bluntly, this international/global economic system is meant to keep certain countries developed and prevents other countries from developing.

DEBUNKING THE MYTH – IN HIS OWN WORDS

In *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Walter Rodney attempts to give meaning to concepts. In so doing, he could unveil the myths that surrounded certain political and economic concepts. Unveil. Or maybe he placed a thorn in the balloon. Fundamental in this effort was his definition of what underdevelopment really is: “Obviously, underdevelopment is not absence of development, because every people have developed in one way or another and to a greater or lesser extent.”¹²

“A second and even more indispensable component of modern underdevelopment is that it expresses a particular relationship of exploitation: namely, the exploitation of one country by another. All of the countries named as ‘underdeveloped’ in the world are exploited by others; and the underdevelopment with which the world is now pre-occupied is a product of capitalist, imperialist and colonialist exploitation. African and Asian societies were developing independently until they were taken over directly or indirectly by the capitalist powers. When that happened, exploitation increased and the export of surplus ensued, depriving the societies of the benefit of their natural resources and labour. That is an integral part of underdevelopment in the contemporary sense.”¹³ “In a way, underdevelopment is a paradox. Many parts of the world that are naturally rich are actually poor and parts that are not so well off in wealth of soil and sub-soil are enjoying the highest standards of living. When the capitalists from the developed parts of the world try to explain this paradox, they often make it sound as though there is something ‘God given’ about the situation.”¹⁴

And in reflecting about development Rodney writes: “Development in human society is a many-sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being. Some of these are virtually moral categories and are difficult to evaluate – depending as they do on the age in which one lives, one’s class origins, and one’s personal code of what is right and what is wrong. (...)

¹⁰ Amitav Ghosh, *Sea of Poppies* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2008), 115.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 116.

¹² Rodney, 13.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

The relations which develop within any given social group are crucial to an understanding of the society as a whole: Freedom, responsibility, skill, etc. have real meaning only in terms of the relations of men in society.”¹⁵

“At the level of social groups, therefore, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships. Much of human history has been a fight for survival against natural hazards and against real and imagined human enemies. Development in the past has always meant the increase in the ability to guard the independence of the social group and indeed to infringe upon the freedom of others – something that often came about irrespective of the will of the persons within the societies involved.”¹⁶

“More often than not, the term ‘development’ is used in an exclusive economic sense – the justification being that the type of economy is itself an index of other social features. What then is economic development? A society develops economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment. This capacity for dealing with the environment is dependent on the extent to which they understand the laws of nature (science), on the extent to which they put that understanding into practice by devising tools (technology), and on the manner in which work is organised. Taking a long-term view, it can be said that there has been constant economic development within human society since the origins of man, because man has multiplied enormously his capacity to win a living from nature.”¹⁷

Assassins of conversation they bury the voice they assassinate, in the beloved grave of the voice, never to be silent. I sit in the presence of rain in the sky’s wild noise of the feet of some who not only, but also, kill the origin of rain, the ankle of the whore, as fastidious as the great fight, the wife of water. Risker, risk. I intend to turn a sky of tears, for you.

"For Walter Rodney" by Martin Carter

IMAGINING A POST- (UNDER) DEVELOPMENT WORLD

In our lifetime, like in the lifetime of those before, we have been told that some are “underdeveloped” because of the desolate P O L I T I C A L , democratic and governmental situations. Imagine the hundreds of coup d’etats that have been carried out in “underdeveloped countries” supported by the US, French, British or other Western administrations. Notable ones include the U.S. government supporting the 1971 coup in Bolivia to topple President Juan José

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

Torres just because he convened the "Asamblea del Pueblo" (People's Assembly or Popular Assembly), or the 1973 CIA orchestrated overthrow of democratically elected president of Chile Salvador Allende, or the 1960 elimination of Congolese prime minister Patrice Lumumba with the support of the USA and Belgium, or the 1987 French orchestrated coup and murder of Burkina Faso's president Thomas Sankara. To name but just a few. In all these examples, the presidents put then in place in these countries were never meant to pursue democracy, but facilitate and lubricate the processes of exploitation of their countries.

Imagine a country like Cameroon ruled by a single president since 1982, and not only backed by all French governments since then, but also permitted to massacre its own citizens under the watchful eyes of all international political bodies. All the while, “developmental aid” and huge loans are given to these same corrupt leaders to build football stadiums, hospitals, schools and roads that are never really built. Although these are facts known to many or all, the loans are still given out making the countries indebted for generations, as a means of prolonging relations of dependence.

In our lifetime, like in the lifetime of those before, we have been told that some are “underdeveloped” because of the poor A G R I C U L T U R A L infrastructure and dependence on producing food products to be exported to far off countries or importing food products that they could actually produce themselves.

Imagine the poultry farmers in Cameroon who breed free land, natural and ecological chickens. A few years back, these Cameroonian poultry farmers would sell a healthy chicken for 5.000 FCFA. But today few would buy that same chicken for 4.000 FCFA. But why? Decades of over-subsvention of the agricultural sector in Europe has led to massive overproduction. The surpluses of sugar, wheat and even chicken bred under terrible hygiene conditions in tight cages and have never seen the light of day are now shipped for dumping prices to Africa and Asia. Before the chicken arrives in Bamenda, Cameroon, it is frozen and thawed severally such that the chicken parts are sometimes germ-ridden. But because they are shipped en masse and offered at dumping prices (ca 2.000 FCFA) way below the local costs of healthy ecological chicken, customers opt for the cheap. Having been brainwashed that everything that comes from the “developed world” is better than what is locally produced, the customers choose an option that implicitly crumbles the local economy.

In our lifetime, like in the lifetime of those before, we have been told that some are “underdeveloped” because they can’t do M O D E R N A R C H I T E C T U R E . From Bogota, Columbia, to Yojakarta, Indonesia, to Douala, Cameroon, all tropical

cities, one finds cement and glass buildings. Houses built as mimics of a Western architectural modernity. In such tropical spaces in which the temperatures outside could go up as far as 40°C in the day, cement and glass buildings allow for 40°C inside. Therefore enormous amounts of energy is invested in the cooling of poorly constructed buildings without a sensitivity to materiality – in such places where people have historically built with adobe, sand, wood or raffia – only to attain a skewed notion of modernity and “development”.

In our lifetime, like in the lifetime of those before, we have been told that some are “underdeveloped” because they have no KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION. To be “developed” means to be assimilated within Western technology, arts, philosophies and sciences. In postcolonial Nigeria, like in Brazil, it is more likely to learn about European and American histories than to learn about Nigerian or Brazilian histories. While William Shakespeare, Charlotte Brontë, James Joyce or George Orwell are regulars on the curriculum in schools in Cameroon or Zimbabwe, it is rather unlikely to find Bessie Head, Ama Ata Aidoo, Chinua Achebe, Mongo Beti, or Dambudzo Marechera on any school curriculum in Europe. A strive for “development” in education has come to mean teaching pupils in tropical areas of the world an alphabet that says A is for apple, and S is for snow, while neither do apples grow nor does snow fall in their areas. A strive for “development” has also come to mean teaching the fundamentals of neoliberal capitalist economics à la Chicago Boys – the group of notorious Chilean economists of the 1970s and 80s, most of whom were students of under some of the torchbearers of neoliberal economy, Milton Friedman and Arnold Harberger at the Department of Economics of the University of Chicago and the economics department at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile.

In our lifetime, like in the lifetime of those before, we have been told that some are “underdeveloped” because they have no LANGUAGE S but just dialects, and to have a language one must speak Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, German or some other Western colonial language. One has no RELIGION, for to have a religion one must be a follower of one of the Abrahamic religions, and better still Christianity in particular. Essentially to be “developed” would mean being assimilated into the CULTURE of those considered purported to be “developed”.

These give one no other room than to understand the notions of “development” and “underdevelopment” as racialized, classicist and imperial concepts that are in place to act as the continuum of the colonial exploitative enterprises.

“These systems of classification became the crux of the projects for bringing “civilization,”

“modernity,” and, later on, “development” to much of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In short, there is no modernity anywhere without this coloniality; coloniality also implies a pervasive Eurocentrism—a hegemonic representation and mode of knowing that claims universality for itself, derived from Europe’s claimed position as the center.”¹⁸

Arturo Escobar

The project THE MYTH OF DEVELOPMENT – THE UNDERDEVELOPMENT COMPLEX takes its cue from and celebrates Walter Rodney’s *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, while asking the question: HOW CAN WE IMAGINE A POST-(UNDER) DEVELOPMENT WORLD? By relating Rodney’s seminal work to the dependency theorists, as much as to the post-development advocates like Ivan Illich, Gustavo Esteva, Wolfgang Sachs, Arturo Escobar or Majid Rahnema, to the struggles of ecofeminists of degrowth like Maria Mies, Amaia Pérez Orozco, Chandra Talpade Mohanty among many others, this project is a daring effort to analyse the status quo and imagine a world that doesn’t exist in the binary of “development” and “underdevelopment”.

The project will be choreographed to manifest itself as a two-fold series of research, exhibitions, performances, lectures, workshops around the myths of “development” and “underdevelopment” as well as imagining and crafting a Post-(under)development world.

“If Walter Rodney’s scholarly and activist contributions exemplified what was most demanded at that particular historical moment – he was assassinated because he believed in the real possibility of radical political change, including in Guyana, his natal land – his ideas are even more valuable today at a time when capitalism has so forcibly asserted its permanency, and when once existing organized opposing forces (not only the socialist community of nations, but also the non-aligned nations) have been virtually eliminated. Those of us who refuse to concede that global capitalism represents the planet’s best future and that Africa and the former third world are destined to remain forever ensconced in the poverty of ‘underdevelopment’ are confronted with this crucial question: how can we encourage radical critiques of capitalism as integral to struggles against racism as we also advance the recognition that we cannot envision the dismantling of capitalism as long as the structures of racism remain intact?”¹⁹

PART I: TOOLS OF MASS SUBVERSION

This first part of the project embraces our reality. We who have been relegated to the trenches of “underdevelopment” have created technologies, sciences, arts that do not only reflect our quotidian, but also are fundamental for the subversions of the terrors of “development”. We have misappropriated technologies and sciences that were imposed on us as means of becoming “developed”, only for us to pervert these sciences and technologies for our own purposes. We, the Chinese, and Nigerians, have adopted the tools of counterfeit and forgery as our weapons of mass subversion. Such that, if Apple creates the newest iPhone technology smartphone with one SIM card, we will counterfeit that same technology and produce a similar smartphone with two or three SIM cards and call it xPhone.

PART II: THE POST-(UNDER) DEVELOPMENT TURN

This second part will bring together artists, activists, scholars and producers like the Senegalese permaculturalists around Goran N’diaye, the Cameroonian green house movement around Roland Fomundam, cooperatives like Somankidi Coura around Bouba Touré, Proceso de Comunidades Negras in Colombia, Zapatistas in Mexico and many others to deliberate on the shortcomings of the principles of “development” and “underdevelopment”. The larger aim of the project is to bring together stakeholders physically, digitally, on radio, as well as other platforms to draw a charter or manifesto to break out of the bondage of “development” and “underdevelopment”. What is at stake is obviously an aesthetic, a philosophical, a scientific, an economic manifestation of Post-(under)development that is translatable from ideas to practice.

The post in Post-(under)development is not meant as a negation of development in the sense of “an event constituting a new stage in a changing situation,” but a breaking free from an ideology of development that is framed around a gradient of colonial power and ingrained in colonial capitalist structures of dependency. Post-(under)development is the negation of the subordination and denigration that is connoted in and with “under”, as no peoples are or should ever be “under” anything or anyone. Post-(under)development is the emancipation from the imperialist logic of extortion and profit of one at the detriment of the other. Post-(under)development

embraces inter- and intra-dependencies as modes of being together in a world in which our well-being, our breath is contingent on the well-being and breath of the other. Post-(under)development is an advocacy of collaborations and cohabitations of different kinds and species rather than the competition and antagonisms between kinds and species. Post-(under) development is an acknowledgement that with each tree that is destroyed in the Amazonas or the tropical rainforest, the reverberations are palpable as far as the North and South poles. Post-(under)development is a radical refusal of the industrialised capitalist economic model as the only way and a fervent repudiation of a universalised Eurocentrism as the sole way of being in the world. And finally, Post-(under)development is the embracing of the plethora of knowledges, arts, sciences, technologies, philosophies that facilitate our situated being in the world with and in relation to others.

PART III: RADIO AS A POST-UNDERDEVELOPMENT PLATFORM

Radio can represent an effective and heuristic Post-(under)development platform. From its very onset radio has made and has erased the difference between “developed” and “underdeveloped” spaces. In one nodge, one can listen to BBC radio as much as African Nr. 1 radio on short waves. The proximity of the so-called “developed” and “underdeveloped” has never been closer. Radio has revealed itself to be a perfect medium to create coalitions between activists, as a mode of resistance and a physical as much as an immaterial space to develop tactics of listening and networks of solidarity. A place of counterinsurgency and of experimentation, an infrathin territory and a threshold, navigating possibilities between the digital and the non digital technologies.

With this project we aim at shaping an on-air-network of activists, sonic agitators, scholars, artists and designers, political economists and practitioners, to share knowledge across languages and sonority and imagine and shape together a post developmental age. A pluriverse of interdependent imaginations, visions and strategies, away from capitalist and industrial productivity and toward transformative conviviality.

Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung

¹⁸ Escobar, Arturo. 2018. *Designs for the Pluriverse. Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

¹⁹ Angela Davis, “Walter Rodney’s Legacy”, Foreword to the 2018 edition of Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London, New York: Verso Books, 2018), xi-xii.14 Ibid, 20.

MORE INFORMATION

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S A V V Y Contemporary—The laboratory of form-ideas is an art space, discursive platform, place for good talks, foods and drinks—a space for conviviality. S A V V Y Contemporary situates itself at the threshold of notions of the West and non-West, to understand and deconstruct them. S A V V Y Contemporary has realized a kaleidoscope of art exhibitions, performances, film screenings, lectures, concerts, readings, talks, dances. S A V V Y Contemporary has established a participatory archive on German colonial history, a performance arts documentation centre, a library, a residency program, as well as educational projects with schools. The art space engages in its neighborhood's history and socio-political realities which are entangled with the reflections and discourses of the project.

S A V V Y Contemporary is Elena Agudio Lynhan Balatbat-Helbock Bona Bell Cecilia Bien Onur Çimen Bilge Emir Sagal Farah Billy Fowo Raisa Galofre Juan Pablo García Sossa Hubert Gromny Hajra Haider Karrar Daniellis Hernandez Anna Jäger Kimani Joseph Aditi Kapur Laura Klöckner Kelly Krugman Mokia Laisin Rafal Lazar António Mendes Lia Milanese Nancy Naser Al Deen Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung Abhishek Nilamber Matthias Rademacher Lema Sikod Meghna Singh Lili Somogyi Ola Zielirska

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