

EVERYTHING
PASSES EXCEPT
THE PAST

Decolonizing
Ethnographic
Museums,
Film Archives,
and Public Space

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ARCHIVES, FILMS AND MEMORIES: INGREDIENTS TO REMEMBER AND FORGET THE PAST

Inês Ponte

To begin with the story of a boy who either lived in the present, or was consumed with recalling the past, is to remember part of a fictional short story by Argentinian writer Jorge Lu s Borges about the young Irineu Funes. An accident caused Funes to forget nothing, and to remember every detail of the past, thus making him suffer from an inability to differentiate or elaborate on his memories. Remembering everything made him incapable of thinking about the past. Funes' condition contrasts with "Everything Passes Except the Past," an international workshop on the politics of memory, sponsored by the Goethe-Institut, which took place over several days in September 2019 at Culturgest in Lisbon, in tandem with the cinema program "Re-imagining the post-colonial archive." Unlike Funes' condition, this event considered the relationship between remembering and forgetting the past.

With the aim of stimulating a wider debate on the past through dialogues between films and people from various parts of the world, the workshop brought together a number of cultural producers, archivists, researchers and artists dedicated to creating, preserving and diffusing partial, incomplete memories. The result could not have differed more from Funes' meticulous memory, so precise that it neither discarded nor compared anything. Alternating between public and internal sessions, debates focused on how to work in, with, and on film archives; it ultimately drew a map with multiple viewpoints on the mutability of memories.

The wide range of participants, in their diversity of practices and origins, led to many comparisons of ways of working on memory through archives. By bringing together speakers from Angola, Belgium, Egypt, England, Germany, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, the Netherlands, Mozambique, Nigeria, Portugal, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the origin and work of the participants revealed unique relationships with the archives with which each person at the workshop had become involved, and which included various types of film archives. The space for dialogue between participants who work on forgetting and memory from various perspectives and resources made the workshop captivating. Each participant brought his or her own story and perspective on balancing between thinking about the past, living in the present, and dreaming about the future of memory. They

showed how they are different and what they have in common, the extent to which each person knew or was unaware of each other's stories, and how much they have to offer one another. For example, one participant shared the story of Funes.

Film materials stored in archives are stimulating resources for working on the construction of memory. As both inheritance and testimony, they can serve as valuable tools for working on the politics of memory, on what we remember and forget about the past, and in so doing, they bear witness to the instrumental role of archives in these processes. An archive lives when it is used, but it is only valid when the material it holds enters into the public space. This idea is grounded in a desire to encourage public access to archives, an access that frees the past from the dominion of memories built by those who hold either political, economic, or social power. This liberation allows people to use the archives to think about memory and history in their different dimensions and overlaps, disparate or complementary, to reflect on collective, personal, institutional, subordinate, intimate, and public memories.

Diversity was one of the keywords used to define the world of film archives. National public archives were referred to in many of the debates, but the cases presented also included archives with large or small collections, that were specialized or far-reaching, institutional or informal, public or private, newly-built or long-standing, decaying or dynamic, collaborative or selective.

With the advantage of establishing a dialogue between people in different positions in history, the plurality of perspectives provided a complex cross-section of the issue of memory built on the nation-state and its ambiguous relationship with film archives. Fighting different official narratives and national imaginaries instituted in equally plural and unequal societies, the participants have pursued their work between dominant and forgotten memories. The discussions on this alternative effort by an extensive range of people trying to invert current policies of forgetting and memory yielded a call for civil society to play a greater role. This role could provide a new basis for the future, one that differs from the current situation.

The partiality of existing records, as well as the particular focus placed on them, provides the opportunity to think in the present about both the occurrences of the past and the diverse meanings added by the passage of time. Given the structural political changes that the world has experienced in the last century, it is a challenge to think about the mutability of memory through material produced for documentary purposes. While an accident may have given Funes the ability to retain the entire past, no archive can achieve that nature. The urgency of constructing archives results from the need to place multiple versions of history in the public space, and to preserve a broader range of memories than the ones currently used by dominant narratives. In the stories of each of the participants, we find motives and ways for recovering the past, and contemporary meanings of constructing memories.

TEARING DOWN BORDERS: EMERGENCY ARCHIVISTS

Let us begin with the peculiar story of an independent Nigerian filmmaker. Nigeria is the African country with the biggest commercial film industry, often called Nollywood for its equivalence to Hollywood. While visiting an abandoned building, this filmmaker accidentally happened upon several deteriorated reels containing remnants of films produced in the 1940s and 1950s by the colonial cinema unit established by the British government. Because he sensed the partial nature of the memories in his hands, the filmmaker gradually became an accidental archivist over the years who is trying to restore a collection whose rough history led him to question how nation states support policies of both remembrance and of forgetting, and who is investigating how successive governments activate or deactivate archives, depending on whether such resources can convey a history that these powers want to maintain. Deteriorated records no longer talk so much about the past they refer to, but they talk fairly loudly about the policy of forgetting that has ruined them.

Or the story of an Egyptian filmmaker who became an emergency counter-archivist. The doors to his country's national archive are closed, limiting access to the fragments of memories it holds. By refusing its citizens the opportunity to discover them, it hampers the subsequent work of decoding these fragments of the past

and using them to think about the country's history. Or the story of an Angolan filmmaker who spent six years producing film footage to build an archive of oral memories about a past that his country's official history has omitted.

These are stories of archivists who did not become so by training, but because, at some point in their lives, they were faced with the need to set up archives for deteriorating memories that were soon to be forgotten, closed or suppressed, in all cases side-lined. These stories are both overlapping and unique, revealing turbulent relationships with the domains of national memories. They are the stories of people trying to expand the dominant public memory, to break the supremacy of access and control by any government or national structure—who struggle so that Funes' inability to think does not dominate their memories. Induced by official politics of memories, they reveal ways of resisting forgetting through the creation of new materials and new uses for old resources, of fragments of memories that have hitherto been side-lined.

Besides being new archivists, these filmmakers also share the fact that they grew up in countries which became independent relatively recently, as the archivist-filmmakers are roughly the same age as their own countries. It should, however, be noted that other workshop participants have embarked on a similar struggle to deal with older countries' memories concerning pasts of colonial domination.

Archives are structured repositories whose dynamics depend on their archivist, a considerably more transitory element compared to the potential permanence of institutions or collections. The story of a German archivist who sees the users of the archive where she works as potential archivists is useful here. This archivist values what each user has to say about the fragments of memories of the world that she is protecting. She regards archives as guardians of fragments, by definition incomplete, and in the interactions of the present, she sees the possibility of adding valuable aspects to them, whether of knowledge, new production, or new reflections. In a context dominated by film archives that store national film productions, this one is supplied by a film festival dedicated to world-wide independent, militant,

and resistance film. Is it by chance that the archive where she works has such a unique collection?

In the discourse of these guardians, researchers, or producers, there was a notable convergence in addressing historical moments through different relationships in the production and use of documentary film records, in that they all seek to challenge current perceptions of the past. Insofar as parameters that are taken for granted in a certain context are called into question in another, this common objective made the gathering especially fruitful, raising the question of the politics of memory and various relationships to the construction of history. Archives also store the cracks in the dominant memory and can generate controversy, be it about access or control over the material, or about dominant public narratives established in the past.

THE BEWILDERMENT OF FRAGMENTS OF THE WORLD'S MEMORY

The travel required to gather these people in the same place raised the issues of territoriality underlying material produced in different parts of the world, but which is now stored in the archives of former metropolises. The impact of the inherent contradictions of these political changes, in a sphere that is largely immutable, prompts questions regarding the identification of these materials and their ease of access.

What can be done to establish a path between material filmed in one territory and stored in another, usually the former European power? These legacies remain largely unknown in both the now-independent countries, and those with pasts of colonial control. The ways of knowing them remain subjugated to the historical categories that have been called into question by fairly recent political changes. As shared histories lived from opposing perspectives, until recently some dominant and others subordinated, the latter struggle for a place from which they can question the former.

An Angolan director, intrigued by the fact that he could find only a few images of guerrillas from the fight for independence in Portuguese archives, soon realised that a search for “terrorists” gave him a much wider panorama of the kinds of images he was

searching for to access his history. Archives are both places that retain materials produced in the past and systems with pre-established means of organization. If memory emerges as a contested territory, archives emerge as repositories where the forgetting of successive generations can be shaken by tools created and used in the past. It makes archives themselves contested territories, not only because of the contents they hold, but because of the structures used for indexing or accessing them—tools now used to produce resistance and revolt. Archives help us think about the construction of the world's memory and their unique partiality makes them so stimulating.

If there are multiple versions of history, depending on who writes it and who reads it, is it possible to connect all archive databases together? In other words, how can institutions with different levels of formality communicate and collaborate with each other? How can we redistribute the disparate material held by European archives within the non-European territories that have become independent nations? What are the possible frameworks for such a redistribution? Who could be involved?

Accessing film material archived at a transnational level is not easy, nor is reusing it. The majority of archives charge prohibitive amounts to low-budget independent productions (whether due to regulations on copyright, production, or costs of the process of facilitation); only a minority offer a free usage of the images in their custody.

We now come to the matter of access, the recurring feeling induced by many archives throughout the world of being a closed door, sometimes slightly ajar, but rarely fully open. The frequent adoption of restricted-access policies has come to create relatively restricted layers of privilege for researchers, filmmakers, and, increasingly, artists. For these researchers, filmmakers, and artists, privilege of access comes with the responsibility of interrogating intentions—whether of these fragments, of the events that created them, or of the condition of archived fragments—and the responsibility of opening a discussion in the public domain over fragments of a now-forgotten past, shelved in narratives constructed in other times, using specific perspectives.

To overcome the closed-door sensation of film archives, we need to debunk the idea that preserving the materials they safeguard consists exclusively of physically preserving them for the future. The matter has been called into question by the increasing revelation of material in various states of preservation. What future is there in this limited access in the present? When this is closed off, who does that memory serve, and for what purposes? From the growing number of films that interrogate archival material, tracing back memories hitherto incarcerated in archives or subjugated to dominant narratives, we know that an open door allows us to think today about the changing meanings that fragments of the past may suggest to us, the present-day viewers, who become then the new archivists of such past and present meanings.

Perhaps the ideal future for archives is to replace the feeling of a closed door with that of a revolving door that strengthens mutual collaboration and makes their images and their past histories circulate, bringing them alive for the present.

RESIST FORGETTING THE OTHERS: MEDIATION AND COLLABORATION WITH IMAGES FROM THE PAST

Below are stories about activities involving fragments of the past, which aim to disturb existing supremacies. These are stories about ways of overcoming some of the difficulties of establishing other constructions of memory, thereby acquiring greater control over their stories. Inequalities in infrastructures, both in terms of preservation and access policies and the politics of memory, have not prevented work from being done; they have made it difficult, but its emergence is unshakable. What remains pending is the visibility of the resulting work, which makes telling these stories even more important.

A Congolese cultural producer is collaborating with European museums and archives to get artists and cultural producers in his country to work on images produced in colonial times. He uses artistic practices to get young people to deal with these images of the past. The producer started the project via remote access, but technological mediation hindered a fluid interaction between historically connected strangers. The producer overcame

this obstacle by visiting one of the Belgian archives in person, where he was faced with the emotional challenge of dealing with the inequality he saw etched in these photographs and films. While showing these images to his family upon his return, he was given ways to heal those emotions, and he was reminded of the importance of working with these images of the past today, to use them to add dynamics from the present.

His story resonates with that of a Belgian artist who carries out her work in German museums on photographs depicting people from all over the world, images reconfigured in systems of abstract categorization that were established several decades ago. As is often the case, these images dehumanize the subjects portrayed. They are rarely used today and little known, which prevents discussions about their existence and their preservation. How can another future be imagined without discussing this past or marking it with a present?

Like the work of archivists and artists, that of researchers mediates between films of the past and the present, a present marked by decades of independence of the territories where the film records were produced. We can point to the story of an English researcher who has studied British colonial films produced in various parts of the world and now held in British archives. His research aims to facilitate access to these films, as well as critical interpretations of their making through a contemporary approach to these weighty colonial productions. Or to the Portuguese researcher simultaneously researching stories of films produced in colonial times and their counterpoint, films of militancy and resistance to Portuguese colonialism. These films produced in territories that suffered long periods of colonization establish gestures of domination and resistance through the same tool: cinema.

We should also emphasize the role of collaboration, for example, between a Portuguese artist and a Guinean director, who seek, through forgotten militant films, to recover the living memories of their production. Mistreated through neglect since their production, their physical restoration was made possible through the aforementioned German archive, which has an unapologetically transnational collection. It is also the

transnationality of these collaborations that helps establish dialogues with these legacies in the present-day. How different is the case of a Portuguese director of German-Jewish origin who works on the border between personal and collective memory, and who looks at his personal history to question a social history?

In a workshop with people from different backgrounds, the question of the participants' various languages arises, which leads to the inevitable selection of a "lingua franca". Any choice implies aspects that may or may not eventually become problematic. In the non-public events there was simultaneous translation from English to French so that some of the participants could follow and participate in the discussion. Simultaneous translation made the participants' linguistic diversity audible. The audiences at public events added further difficulties to navigating the diversity of languages, contexts, and experiences of those involved. To deal with this Tower of Babel, events open to the public involved either simultaneous or consecutive translation. The enthusiasm generated by the possibilities of a meeting dedicated to sharing between people from different countries with diverse experiences created expectations that were difficult to meet in a context where hardly anyone heard their mother tongue. Learning about the memories and experiences of others requires an effort of patience that not everyone is always willing to make.

In the internal sessions, the program aimed to include screenings, which quickly created time constraints for the debate. The organization responded by quickly revising a schedule that had taken months to develop to allocate more time to dialogue about people's experiences and for group discussion.

The documentary films and excerpts shown during the workshop, in public or internal sessions, also covered a wide spectrum, both in terms of context and production location, and included films produced both in the distant past and more recently, some constructed using fragments of the past. Digitized analogue films were screened, some restored and others in the physical condition in which they were found, along with recent films that use archival materials in the most varying conditions. The films and excerpts previously chosen by some of the participants set the tone for debate. Let us briefly consider their reception.

IT'S NOT THE FORM, IT'S THE TEXT

I will not be impartial in my choice, as I have selected films that employ a similar formal device ("dispositif") that provoked different reactions among the viewers. On three or four occasions, the participants saw excerpts and films in their entirety that suggest that the viewers' reaction to these images with a documentary appearance was conditioned not so much by their form, rather by their textual qualities. To highlight the different reactions to formally similar films that were nevertheless shaped by different discursive approaches, I will consider them in a different order from the one in which they were shown. I will reorder them through their narration device, from a more authoritative one to others in which the narrator's posture or of his or her text look to impose other relations with images.

Let us take as a reference an audiovisual format that uses an explanatory narration, constructed on the basis of the distance between those who film and those who are filmed, characteristic of many films produced in colonial contexts for propaganda purposes. This form also epitomises the style of television journalism reporting and educational documentary, both in contrast to the authored documentary. While the first genre has now come to be associated with propaganda purposes, the second continues to value authority and veracity—but not as documentary cinema. For this there is the third genre: authored documentaries.

So as not to forget the deafness of colonial cinema's discourse to the subjects it filmed, one of the participants projected a short colonial film produced in Cameroon in the 1940s whose sound had deteriorated to the point of being difficult to understand, and accompanied it with a transcript of the narration. This gesture highlights the weight of the textual aspect in the perception of the images; it reveals the narration as an indicator of the kind of authority that a film seeks to have.

We will start by talking about an excerpt from *The New Egyptians* (1977, by Michael Croucher, England), a documentary produced by the British television channel BBC about the daily life of a family living in Cairo. The British speaker explained what the image does not explicitly convey to a viewer unfamiliar with

the context. Sarah Maldoror's documentary, *Fogo—Île de Feu* ("Island of Fire," 1979, 23 min. Cape Verde), produced through a commission from the PAIGC, a liberation movement that became the dominant political party in both Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau, formally adopted the same tone. Its assertive discourse about the inhabitants it portrayed was a carbon copy of the same strategic expedient, where the voice of those filmed appears obliterated. Among the audience members, the question asked applies to any of these films: how much of their text was produced in collaboration?

There was a more ambivalent reaction to Daniel Blaufuks' film, *Judenrein* (2019, 11 min.), which sought in his narration to offer a reflection on social dimensions that the images alone did not show, namely the change in the population demographics of a Polish village, where a Jewish majority became a small minority and then ultimately disappeared, at the hands of both the Nazis and then the local, non-Jewish residents themselves, who killed the few Jews who returned from the concentration camps in pogroms held "after" the end of World War II. Found for sale in the virtual world, the images that the narrator considered have no known author. The off-screen speech results from a negotiation between history and image, a conscious choice to highlight a story hidden in the images by questioning the images. The choice was made to build a personal discourse on the visual and material aspects, mediated by their relationship with these images and the media holding them. After the screening, an animated discussion ensued regarding the value of a personal text as a counterpoint to the usual, seemingly detached nature of texts in colonial films. We had the opportunity to see a similar narrative device in *Préface à des Fusils pour Banta* ("Preface to Arms for Banta," 2011, 26 min., by Mathieu Kleyebe Abbonnenc), a short film combining the use of archival photographs with animation. The text, narrated by a female voice, included the outline of a project by Sarah Maldoror, which did not find its final form as a film. In completing an unfinished project thirty years later, the text of Abbonnenc's film plays with an imagined past of what it could have been.

The public screening of a silent film, which consisted of a documentary record of the first national assembly of Guinea-

Bissau, in 1973, was widely applauded. The film was presented with the living testimony of Sana na N'Hada, its director, who was present in the room, in a recollection translated into English by the artist Filipa César, with whom he has collaborated. The audience participated in a real-time negotiation between the moving images, memory, and its translation, in a session that showed how Guinean cinema was born at the same time as the country itself.

Other films that used the device of narration combined interviews or speeches by their participants, as in the case of *Uma Memória em Três Actos* ("A Memory in Three Acts," 2016, 64 min. by Inadelso Cossa, Mozambique); as well as *Carnaval en Guiné Bissau* (1980, 13 min. by Sarah Maldoror, Guinea Bissau). Even bearing in mind that these voices are always mediated by the current discourse of political propaganda and the hitherto silenced discourse of their experience of the past, there were variations among those who were given a direct voice. Thus, the same device appeared with different connotations.

Reactions to the viewing were followed by conversations that inquired how the films were produced, distributed, and used. In most cases, these aspects are absent from the film itself, but could be obtained from the multiplicity of devices supporting its screenings: in its program, in its presentation, or in its discussion. In the awareness of the ephemeral nature of their work, the presenters worked even harder.

OPENING MEMORY TO THE WORLD AND CONNECTING THE WORLDS OF MEMORIES

By bringing together the voices and experiences of filmmakers, artists, archivists and cultural producers, the workshop was instigating and inspiring. Aiming to discuss the legacy of film archives, the debate not only revealed the intensity of the question of memory, but also the vitality of work on fragments of the past that is being carried out in various parts of the world. It opened the door to new dialogues between different practitioners as well as between agents familiar with opposing historical narratives. It established the possibility of building networks and connections between bodies of knowledge, practices, interests,

ideas, experiences, and outlooks. The audiences that attended the cinema sessions discovered how film archives can be used as places to make us question what we learn through our eyes, both from watching films and discussing them—why and how were they made, and where were they shown?—in order to think about the past and the memories we have of it today.

The workshop enriched an evolving debate in Portugal over film archives, different fragments of the past, structures for their preservation and identification, and their uses. We are far from having the capability of Funes' unfailing memory, but the workshop showed us that this is not the capability we are missing. What we lack is more spaces for us to listen and think together about issues of memories.

ALESSANDRA FERRINI is a London-based artist, researcher, and educator. She is a PhD candidate at the University of the Arts London and is affiliated with InteRGRace, the Interdisciplinary Group on Race and Racisms. Her practice is rooted in lens-based media, anti-colonial and memory studies, historiographical and archival practices. Experimenting with the expansion and hybridization of the documentary film, she is interested in the way historical narratives are produced and how their implied ideologies create subjects—be they individuals or societies. Her research investigates Italian foreign and racial politics, notions of resistance, positionality, and reflexivity. In particular, it is preoccupied with questioning the legacies of Italian colonialism and fascism with a specific interest in the past and present relations between Italy and the African continent. Her work spans across moving image, installation, and dialogic formats, as well as writing, publishing and collaboration.

BÉNÉDICTE SAVOY is professor of Modern Art History at the Technical University of Berlin and holds the International Chair for “Cultural History of Artistic Heritage in Europe, eighteenth-twentieth Century” at the Collège de France in Paris. Her research is mainly focused on forced transfer of artworks in times of war and during the colonial era. She is a leading voice in the current public debates on the history of collecting under imperial and colonial circumstances and issues of restitution. She has also been part of many commissions of trust including the Scientific Advisory Board for the German Tentative List of UNESCO-World Heritage Sites (2013–2014), the conseil scientifique du Musée du Louvre (2015–present), and the German Lost Art Foundation (2015–present).

BIANCA BALDI is a South African artist who deals with hidden infrastructures and narratives in her films, installations, photographs, and images. Evoking the histories of film, studio photography, and Trompe-l'œil, she positions carefully chosen objects and images revealing complex webs of political, economic, and cultural influences. Her work has been featured in large international exhibitions such as the eleventh Rencontres de

Bamako (Mali), eleventh Shanghai Biennale (China), the eighth Berlin Biennale (Germany) and group exhibitions at Kunsthalle Bern (Switzerland), Extra City Kunsthal, Antwerp (Belgium), Kunstverein Braunschweig, and Kunstverein Frankfurt (Germany).

CHRISTIAN KOPP is a historian who studied in Berlin and London. Together with Mnyaka Sururu Mboro, he is the co-founder of Berlin Postkolonial for whom he works until today. He has co-developed numerous exhibitions on German colonial history, including “zurückGeschaugt” on the 1896 colonial exhibition in the district of Treptow in Berlin. He regularly leads guided tours in the German capital, be they in the streets or critical tours in museums. As a member of the project DEKOLONIALE, he works in cooperation with Berlin district museums to document places of colonial history and anti-colonial resistance. As a co-founder of the campaign “No Humboldt 2!,” he has pushed for debates on restitution and repatriation in the public sphere and a critique of the newly rebuilt Berlin Palace.

CLÉMENTINE DELISS works across the borders of contemporary art, curatorial practice, and critical theory. She is Associate Curator at KW Institute for Contemporary Art where she runs the Metabolic Museum-University. Between 2010–2015, she directed the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt instituting a new research lab for remediating collections held in ethnographic museums. She was a Fellow of the Institute of Advanced Study Berlin and has taught curatorial practice and art theory at ENSAPC Cergy, Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design, and the University of Fine Arts, Hamburg. She recently co-directed “Home Museum” for LagosPhoto20, and is developing “Generator,” a new art infrastructural project together with African Artists’ Foundation in Lagos. Her recent book “The Metabolic Museum” was published by Hatje Cantz in co-production with KW.

DANIEL BLAUFUKS is a visual artist from Germany and teaches as professor at the University of Fine Arts, Lisbon, Universidade Católica, Lisbon, and others. His numerous awards include outstanding achievements/distinctions or prizes, AICA-MC

award for visual arts 2016, nominated for the Deutsche Börse Award 2015, Best Portuguese Documentary, *Indie*, Lisboa 2011, and best proposal LOOP, Barcelona, 2008, as well as Best Photography Book of the Year in the International Category of PhotoEspaña 2007 and BES Photo Award 2007.

DIDI CHEEKA is an off-Nollywood filmmaker, film critic, and co-founder and artistic director of Lagos Film Society, an alternative cinema center dedicated to the founding of the first Arthouse cinema in Nigeria. He is the creator of the archival project “reclaiming history, unveiling memory” and, in collaboration with the Arsenal Institute of Film and Video Art, Didi has launched “Decasia—International Film Festival of Rescued Images”.

DIDIER HOUÉNOUDÉ is a professor of Art History at University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin. His field of interest covers, among others, African contemporary art, patrimonial issues, urbanism, and development of African cities. He was chief assistant of the department of History and Archæology at the Social Sciences Faculty of the University of Abomey and counsellor to the Minister of Culture of Benin. He was Director of the Cultural Heritage of Benin, in charge of the heritage policy and of the Museums. Didier Houénoudé is currently Director of the National Institute of Art, Archæology and Culture Professions at University Abomey-Calavi. He has written several articles about contemporary art in Benin and about Beninese cultural heritage.

DUANE JETHRO is a Junior Research Fellow at the Centre for Curating the Archive at the University of Cape Town. He works on contested public cultures and the cultural construction of heritage. He has held a post-doctoral position in the research project “Making Differences: Transforming Museums and Heritage in the twenty-first century,” at the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage, CARMAH, at the Humboldt University Berlin. CARMAH was founded by Professor Sharon Macdonald, and is funded by her 5-year Alexander von Humboldt Professorship. He has published in *Material Religion*, *the International Journal of Heritage Studies* and *Tourist Studies*. His book, *Heritage*

Formation and the Senses in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Aesthetics of Power, was published in 2020 by Bloomsbury Academic.

FILIPA CÉSAR is an artist and filmmaker. Since 2011 she has been researching the origins of the cinema of the African liberation movement in Guinea-Bissau as a laboratory of resistance to ruling epistemologies. Her film *Spell Reel* is the result of a research and digitization project that she initiated together with Sana nã n'Hada, Flora Gomes, and many others in collaboration with the Arsenal Institute of Film and Video Art. The resulting body of work comprises 16mm films, digital archives seminars, screenings, publications, and ongoing collaborations with artists, theorists, and activists.

FRADIQUE, OR MÁRIO BASTOS, is a filmmaker from Angola and an outstanding voice in Angolan Cinema. In 2010 he and his associates set up the production company Geração 80. From 2010 to 2015 he worked on his first full-length documentary *Independence*, about Angola's Liberation Struggle. The film won the Angola's Cultural National Prize for Cinema. It was recognized as a remarkable step towards recovering Angola's collective memory.

GRACE NDIRITU is a British-Kenyan artist whose artworks are concerned with the transformation of our contemporary world, including the impact of globalisation and environmental justice, through her films, photography, paintings, and social practice projects with refugees, migrants, and indigenous groups. Works including *The Ark: Center for Interdisciplinary Experimentation*; *COVERSLUT*@fashion and economic project and the performance art series, *Healing The Museum*, have been shown around the world since 2012. Ndiritu has been featured in *TIME* magazine, Phaidon's *The 21st Century Art Book*, *Art Monthly*, *Apollo Magazine's* "40 under 40" list, *Elephant Magazine*, and *The Sunday Times Radio Show* with Mariella Frostrup. Her work is housed in museum collections such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), The British Council, The Modern

Art Museum (Warsaw), and private collections such as the King Mohammed VI Collection in Morocco and The Walther Collections in New York and Germany. Her experimental art writing and images have been published by The Whitechapel Gallery in the *Documents of Contemporary Art* anthology series, *The Paris Review*, *Le Journal Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers*, *Animal Shelter Journal*, *Semiotext(e)*, The MIT Press, *Metropolis M*, and The Oxford University Press.

GUIDO GRYSEELS is the general Director of the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA) in Tervuren, Belgium. The RMCA is a federal scientific institute for research and information dissemination with respect to Africa in the fields of biology, earth sciences, anthropology, history, and agriculture/forestry. The RMCA has world famous reference collections for Central Africa and has international recognition for its exhibitions and research on cultural and natural heritage, societies, and natural environments of Africa.

INÊS PONTE is a Portuguese anthropologist interested in visibility and knowledge production. She combines anthropology with history as a way to explore relations between the local-regional-global from a postcolonial perspective in several geographies (Angola, India), as well as the potential of visual methods for research, namely, cinema, photography, and drawing. She is also a museum researcher (Angola, Belgium, Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland) engaging with institutional and private archives. She has collaborated in transdisciplinary teams, crisscrossing anthropology with psychology, literature, art critic, education, and communication, in Portugal, India, the UK, and Angola. She has coordinated the research project *Mobilising Archives: photography in Southern Angola* (2017–2020).

JANA J. HAECKEL is a researcher, independent curator, and lecturer based in Brussels. She holds a PhD in art history and is associate researcher at the Lieven Gevaert Research Centre For Photography (KU Leuven/UCL). Her written and curatorial work examines visual representation and documentation strategies in contemporary art, with a focus on postcolonial theory and the ethics

of photography. In 2019–20 she supervised the international project “Everything Passes Except the Past” for the Goethe-Institut Brussels. Recent curated group exhibitions include “Resistant Faces” at Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2021), “Everything Passes Except The Past” at Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2020), “Performing the Border” at Kunstraum Niederösterreich, Vienna (2017).

KARFA SIRA DIALLO is an editor and essayist. His topics are cultural diversity and memory work, especially in the areas of slavery and colonization. He is working on the recognition of the history of the slave trade in Bordeaux and currently heads the international association Mémoires & Partages in Bordeaux and Dakar. He organizes documentary exhibitions on memory, such as the *Frères d'âme* exhibition. Since 2014, he has been director of the communications agency KakatArt Consulting, which is specialized in memory intelligence. In 2018, he initiated the Black History Month in Bordeaux to commemorate the cultural contribution of African descendants to local and global history.

LINDA PORN is a Mexican artist who works in the visual arts and also as a theater actress. She creates traditional Mexican maché paper projects (sculpture piñatas), organizes performances about violence to motherhood and children and personal workshops. Exhibitions: MoMa (Museum of Modern Art) in New York / USA, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) in Barcelona / Spain, CCCB—Centre de Cultura Contemporània Barcelona / Spain and MUSAC, Museum of Contemporary Art in Castile and León / Spain.

LOTTE ARNDT is a French culture theorist. She accompanies the work of artists who critically interrogate the postcolonial present and the paradoxes of modernity from a transnational perspective. Within this context, her main focus is on works of art in colonial collections. Lotte Arndt is the author of a dissertation that was supervised jointly by the University of Paris VII and the Humboldt University in Berlin, on the subject of postcolonial changes in African cultural magazines in Paris. She lectures at

the School of Art and Design in Valencia, is a member of the Global Art Prospective (INHA Paris), and is currently heading a research project on toxic collections. Her most recent exhibition projects include: *Sammy Baloji. Extractive Landscapes*, Salzburg, Austria 2019; Salzburg Summer Academy with Sammy Baloji, 2019; *L'intrus* (curatorial work with Natasha Marie Llorens), Tabakalera Donostia, San Sebastián, Spain 2018; *Tampered Emotions. Lust for Dust*, Triangle France Marseille, France 2018; *One Sentence Exhibition*, Kadist Paris, France 2018.

MNYAKA SURURU MBORO is a Kiswahili teacher and activist. He is one of the founders and board members of the “Berlin Postkolonial e.V.,” which deals with the hidden colonial history of the German capital. He has guided historical tours in Berlin for more than twenty years, especially in the so-called African quarter. Mboro has been politically active in the repatriation of human remains plundered in colonized resistance fighters and brought to Europe for racist research. He is also a member of different councils for the renaming of street names which have honored colonialists until today. He is also a member of the working group BARAZANI.BERLIN which develops counter-exhibitions to the newly rebuilt Humboldt Forum.

OVQ (ALBERTO LÓPEZ BARGADOS, ANDRÉS ANTEBI ARNÓ, PABLO GONZÁLES MORANDI, ELOY MARTÍN CORRALES) The “Observatori de la Vida Quotidiana” (OVQ) is an independent and transdisciplinary collective co-directed by the anthropologist Andrés Antebi and the historian Pablo González, who has been working since 1999 on historical and ethnographic research projects mainly in Barcelona. Its objective is to combine the tools of social research with the evocative power of the graphic and visual arts. In recent times, his works have explored themes as varied as the history of graphic reporterism, citizen demonstrations, colonial impressions in Barcelona or the construction of the historical memory of the neighborhoods from the domestic photographic backgrounds. OVQ works since 2015 in *Barcelona Colonial Metropolis* a research, exhibition, publication project in association with Alberto López Bargados, doctor in anthropology

and professor at the Department d'Antropologia Social of the Universitat de Barcelona. He has worked for several years in Mauritania, Sahara, Morocco and Cape Verde, on the field of colonial anthropology, on the impact of colonial policies on the morphology of colonized societies and on the ancient metropolis.

SALLY FENAUX BARLEYCORN is a film professional based in Barcelona. She started working as a crewmember in film and commercial shoots in 2009. She directed her first short film, *Skinhearts*, in 2014—granted by the Amsterdam Funds for the Arts-, a science fiction film both narrative and experimental that challenged our view about human touch and its future in western societies. Later she collaborated with Erika Lust as a guest director in *Touch Crimes*, a short film of ethical and feminist adult cinema that went into winning best SciFi film at the Toronto International Porn film festival in 2018. Meanwhile she has produced and shot independently short films like *Blame* (2017) and *Unburied* (2019). She continues to develop scripts and ideas for films, series, and short films in the genre of science fiction and social justice, always with a great dose of subtext and visual metaphors.

STEFANIE SCHULTE STRATHAUS is a film and video curator who lives and works in Berlin. She is co-director of Arsenal—Institute for Film and Video Art and founding director of Forum Expanded, a section of the Berlin International Film Festival which negotiates the boundaries of cinema. Her curatorial work comprises numerous film programs, retrospectives, and exhibitions. Since 2010 her main focus lies on the Arsenal's film archive and on new concepts of curating film archives in general. In this context she has been working closely with archives in Egypt, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and Sudan. She currently co-curates the project *Archive außer sich* with the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Film Feld Forschung GmbH, Harun Farocki Institut, SAVVY Contemporary, pong film GmbH and the masters program *Film Culture: Archiving, Programming, Presentation* at the Goethe University Frankfurt, taking place in in the framework of *The New Alphabet*, a project of Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin.

TAMER EL SAID is a filmmaker and co-founder of Cimatheque Alternative Film Center in Cairo, a multipurpose space that provides facilities, training and programming for the independent filmmaking community. He has also established an archive that houses a growing collection of diverse film-related material.

YAA ADDÆ NANTWI is a Ghanaian-British curator, writer, and teaching artist. The emancipatory potential of play is central to their practice, as is dream work. Rooted in indigenous African invention, Yaa works to reimagine cultural infrastructure and expand means of producing art histories. Drawn to collective knowledge-making, Yaa co-created “Black Diaspora Literacy: From Negritude to Drake,” a ten week course supported by Tufts University's Experimental College. Later, they were a researcher for Ano Institute's Mobile Pavilion and Cultural Encyclopedia of African Art. Currently based in London, Yaa is a culture staff writer at AMAKA magazine and manages a digitalstudio, A-kra, which offers an online anticolonial art history incubator (Decolonize The Art World) and residency program (The Imaginarium). They have spoken at Southbank Centre, Nubuke Foundation, The Barbican and lead workshops with Autograph ABP, The Church of Black Feminist Thought, The Library of Africa and The African Diaspora, and Rumpus Room.

YANN LEGALL is researcher at the Institute for Art History at TU Berlin as part of the project “The Restitution of Knowledge” which investigates colonial spoliations in so-called “punitive expeditions.” He has been a member of Berlin Postkolonial since 2015, an organization committed to a reappraisal of German colonialism and the historical origins of racism within German society and in the Berlin-Brandenburg region. His PhD project at the University of Potsdam is closely linked to his work with Berlin Postkolonial since it examines how human remains repatriation and restitution claims have stimulated a transnational memory of colonial violence. With the initiative Postcolonial Potsdam, he leads tours on traces of colonial and Afro-European history in the Park Sanssouci, and has newly developed an audio-guide-app of colonial traces in the city of Potsdam.

EVERYTHING PASSES
EXCEPT THE PAST
Decolonizing Ethnographic
Museums, Film Archives,
and Public Space

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Jana J. Hæckel

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Everything Passes Except the Past takes an artistic and discursive approach to coming to grips with a colonial past that remains present in museums, public space, and image archives. The contributions in this book propose visionary theoretical, practical, and ethical foundations for future museums based on artistic and curatorial remediation of ethnographic collections. They also cover the role of colonial films in our collective and national memory, as well as the challenges and perspectives of tearing down or replacing monuments and renaming streets.

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