

Spring Exhibitions & March Meeting 2022



SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

4 March – 7 August

The talks, panels and presentations at March Meeting 2022: *The Afterlives of the Postcolonial* will take place online and on-site while the performances and film screenings will take place at Sharjah Art Foundation venues. All times listed are UAE local time (GMT +4).

Friday, 4 March

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Exhibiting the Postcolonial Archives

Workshop (by invitation only), The Africa Institute, Sharjah

Iftikhar Dadi (art historian, artist and John H. Burris Professor, Department of History of Art, Director of the South Asia Program, Cornell University), **Ntone Edjabe** (founder and Editor-in-Chief, Chimurenga), **Naeem Mohaiemen** (artist, Associate Professor of Visual Arts and Concentration Head of Photography, School of Arts, Columbia University; remotely), **Ala Younis** (artist, researcher and curator)

The goal of this workshop is to explore the content of the 'Postcolonial Archives' segment of SB15 exhibitions. It will focus on the organising principal of this segment, in addition to identifying potential works and artefacts to be exhibited, and draw the timeline of major transformative events and landmarks in the history of decolonisation across the Global South and other relevant parts of the world that have been entangled in the colonialisation and liberation projects. The discussion will take inspiration from Vijay Prashad's *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*, among other books, which have mapped specific sites (cities) as wellsprings of major events that shaped decolonisation movements and the rise of the postcolonial. These developments were not only theoretical constructs but also intellectual, aesthetic, artistic and literary imperatives that have materialised as landmark events across diverse sites and institutions and expressed in visual materials, photography and films, publications, posters, and other media.

4:00 pm

Spring 2022 exhibitions
Opening reception
Bait Al Serkal, Arts Square

CAMP: Passages through Passages

Bait Al Serkal, Arts Square

Khalil Rabah: What is not

Galleries 1, 2 and 3, Al Mureijah Art Spaces

Lawrence Abu Hamdan: The Sonic Image

Galleries 4, 5 and 6, Al Mureijah Art Spaces

4:15 – 4:35 pm

Performance by CAMP
Bait Al Serkal, Arts Square

Shuttles to Al Mureijah Art Spaces will be available from Sharjah Art Museum at 5:45 pm.

6:30 – 7:15 pm

Artist-led tour: Khalil Rabah
Galleries 1, 2 and 3, Al Mureijah Art Spaces

7:15 – 8:00 pm

Artist-led tour: Lawrence Abu Hamdan
Galleries 4, 5 and 6, Al Mureijah Art Spaces

All tours begin at the entrance to the gallery where the exhibition is located.
The tour for Khalil Rabah and Lawrence Abu Hamdan will begin in Galleries 1 and 4 respectively.

MARCH MEETING: THE AFTERLIVES OF THE POSTCOLONIAL

5–7 March 2022

Sharjah Institute of Theatrical Arts

March Meeting 2022 (MM 2022) will convene under the banner of *The Afterlives of the Postcolonial* as an overarching theme which is intended to examine the persistent legacies of colonialism as well as emerging issues that have impacted recent global cultural, aesthetic and artistic practices. MM 2022 will, therefore, build on the themes of MM 2021 as well as engage the overarching theoretical framework of SB15: Thinking Historically in the Present in relationship to Okwui Enwezor's conception of the 'Postcolonial Constellation'. *The Afterlives of the Postcolonial* theme allows MM 2022 participants to examine the issues and challenges of our times in light of postcolonial studies, which has dominated the academy and transformed the cultural and artistic worlds for the last three or more decades. These current and emerging challenges encompass a wide range of issues that includes racism, settler colonialism, apartheid and other persistent structural inequalities, indigeneity and sovereignty as well as massive migrations to the North, new imperial wars and the return of colonial violence, social movements, such as Black Lives Matter, reparation, indigenous rights and climate change in addition to restitution and repatriation of looted artefacts. These issues are compounded by intensification of surplus and extraction and the illusive nature of transnational capital, and the emergence of surveillance capitalism. They are moreover exacerbated by environmental degradation and global warming, associated with the proposed Anthropocene epoch. The meeting will also discuss new concepts and theoretical frameworks that have since emerged in the academy and the public sphere such as 'intersectionality', 'coloniality', 'decoloniality' and 'gendered identities'.

The 'postcolonial' in the title is perceived here in relation to postcolonialism as the critical study of colonialism and imperialism and their legacies in all spheres of cultural and social studies. It is understood as the critical theory projected against hegemonic-imperial analyses of the historical, cultural, literary and artistic productions by both the coloniser and the colonised. Mindful of debates around the term postcolonialism as well as the asynchronicity of the colonial experience and decolonisation processes, the 'postcolonial' here refers to the ideological and cultural responses to colonialist structures and formulations rather than making a claim for a condition that transcends colonialism all together. To discuss the 'afterlives' of the postcolonial therefore, MM 2022 brings together key voices whose work represent discourses, practices, theories and critical perspectives that may have emerged earlier from the terrain of the postcolonial, but now are decidedly informed by and focused on analyses of the world in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century and its present and future challenges.

Saturday, 5 March

- 9:30–10:00 am Registration for March Meeting 2022
Sharjah Institute of Theatrical Arts, Al Mureijah Square
- 10:00–10:15 am Welcome remarks
Hoor Al Qasimi (President and Director, Sharjah Art Foundation)
- 10:15–11:00 am **Imperatives to Reimagine the Postcolonial**
Keynote
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (University Professor, Department of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University)

As global neoliberalism becomes the main instrument of exploitation, ideological oppression, and subalternisation, we have to re-imagine what the colonies were and our complicity with the colonies. What was there before the colonies? Did all deployment of power relations start with the colonies? Is our task still only to undo the effects of colonisation? Are we nothing but **post**-colonial? As planetary destruction by human greed is upon us, the mindset change that is required must accommodate such questions and more.

11:00–1:00 pm

Persistent Structural Inequalities: Settler Colonialism, Segregation and Apartheid

Panel

Noura Erakat (human rights attorney and Associate Professor, Department of Africana Studies and the Programme in Criminal Justice, Rutgers University), **Premesh Lalu** (Professor, History, The Africa Institute and Founding Director, Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape) and **Khalil Rabah** (artist, Artistic Director, Riwaq Biennale and founder, Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind), Moderator: **Nathalie Handal** (poet, writer and Visiting Associate Professor, Practice in Literature and Creative Writing, NYU Abu Dhabi)

This panel will focus on persistent systems of inequality, which have historically caused the displacement of indigenous and colonised populations, or their forced resettlements in designated areas. Such systems, engendered by policies of settler colonial states and apartheid regimes, are often protected by hegemonic legal frameworks that justify, naturalise and perpetuate them. This panel examines the roles and possibilities of postcolonial studies and settler colonial theory, as well as literary, visual and performance genres and their related perspectives and aesthetics, which deepen and enhance our understanding of empire and its legacies, and resistances to them.

1:00–2:30 pm

Lunch

2:30–4:30 pm

Migrations to the North, Forced Repatriation and the New Middle Passage

Panel

Zahid Chaudhary (Associate Professor, English Department, Princeton University), **Ayesha Hameed** (artist and Senior Lecturer, Visual Cultures, Goldsmiths College, University of London), **Bouchra Khalili** (artist; remotely) and Rachid Koraichi (artist) Moderator: **Awam Amkpa** (Dean of Arts and Humanities, NYU Abu Dhabi and Global Network Professor, Drama, Social and Cultural Analysis, NYU New York)

Recent celebration of the talent of artists, filmmakers and writers from the Global South by western institutions stands in stark contrast to the rise of xenophobia and anti-immigration policies in Europe and North America. Haunting images of migrants from the Global South drowning in the Mediterranean Sea and the eastern edges of the Atlantic Ocean, speak to the horrors of the 'new middle passage'. We witness, today, the alienation of migrant workers and artists, and forced repatriations, alongside policies of multicultural inclusivity. This panel unpacks the paradoxes of anti-immigration against the celebration of greater global cultural production and exchange.

4:30–5:00 pm

Coffee break

5:00–7:00 pm

Persistent Structural Inequalities: Indigeneity and Sovereignty

Panel

Brook Andrew (artist, writer, curator, founder, BLAK C.O.R.E. and Director, Reimagining Museums and Collections, The University of Melbourne), **Gerald McMaster** (curator, artist, professor, OCAD University and Director, Centre for Indigenous Visual Knowledge; remotely), Jolene Rickard (artist and Associate Professor, Department of History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University; remotely), **Megan Tamati-Quennell** (Associate Indigenous Curator, Contemporary Art | Kairauhi Taketake Toi Onāiane, Govett Brewster Art Gallery and Curator Modern and Contemporary Maori and Indigenous Art, Te Papa) Moderator: **Iftikhar Dadi** (art historian, artist and John H. Burris Professor, Department of History of Art and Director of the South Asia Program, Cornell University)

According to the UN Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Rights, indigenous populations have been accorded collective rights regarding control 'over certain areas colonised by the mainstream population at a certain point of history.' These rights have been enshrined in concepts such as 'sovereignty' and 'self-determination', which have been a source of tension as they have challenged the moral and political authority of the states that claim or exercise authority over indigenous territories and peoples. This panel brings together theorists and practicing artists, among others, who have engaged with such issues, to discuss and interrogate ideas of 'indigeneity' and 'sovereignty', in the context of contemporary art, culture and politics

9:00–10:10 pm

Film Screening

Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask (1996)

Isaac Julien

Mirage City Cinema, Al Mureijah Square

Sunday, 6 March

- 10:00–10:30 am Registration
- 10:30 am–12:30 pm **The Environment, Climate and Global Warming, and the Anthropocene**
Panel
John Akomfrah (artist), **Carolina Caycedo** (artist), **T J Demos** (writer and Patricia and Rowland Rebele Endowed Chair in Art History, Department of the History of Art and Visual Culture, University of California, Santa Cruz) and **Hrair Sarkissian** (artist) Moderator: **Amy Niang** (Associate Professor, Political Science, The Africa Institute)
- The world as we know it is threatened by unprecedented environmental degradation, climate change and global warming, seemingly associated with the proposed Anthropocene epoch. This crisis, intensified over the last two decades, has led to the emergence of social and political movements opposed to continued dependence on environmentally damaging natural resource extraction and unchecked wasteful consumption in the Global North. This panel examines this unfolding crisis and the response to it within both the scientific community, and the worlds of art and literature.
- 12:30– 2:00 pm Lunch
- 2:00– 4:00 pm **Restitution and Repatriation of Looted Artworks and Artefacts**
Panel
David Adjaye (architect), **Ngairé Blankenberg** (Director, Smithsonian National Museum of African Art), **Chika Okeke-Agulu** (Director, Program in African Studies and Professor, Art and Archaeology and African American Studies, Princeton University), **Michael Rakowitz** (artist; remotely), Moderator: **Salah M. Hassan** (Director, The Africa Institute, Sharjah, and Distinguished Professor of Arts and Sciences, Cornell University)
- Western museums and collectors have historically asserted their roles as custodians of art and artefacts pillaged and looted during European and North American colonial occupations and interventions in the Global South. Arguments such as lack of ‘specific provenance’, poor condition of storage, lack of proper conservation, climate control, security systems and lack of proper spaces for display in countries of origin, have been persistently used as excuses for the refusal of return of such artefacts. Since the 1970s, the debate over restitution and repatriation of looted artefacts have been raging with some very limited progress in recent years. This panel considers persisting questions and recent developments in the scholarship, museological practices and policy making, with regards to the restitutions and repatriation of cultural heritage of the former colonised.
- 4:00– 4:30 pm Coffee break
- 4:30 – 6:30 pm **New Social Movements, ‘Black Lives Matter’ and its Global Reverberations**
Panel
Meena Kandasamy (activist, poet, novelist and translator), **Russell Rickford** (Associate Professor, History, Cornell University; remotely), **Ahmad Sikainga** (Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellow, The Africa Institute, Sharjah and Professor, African History, Ohio State University) and **Suraj Yengde** (Research Associate, Department of African and African American Studies, Harvard University) Moderator: **Elizabeth W. Giorgis** (Associate Professor, Art History, Theory and Criticism, The Africa Institute)
- Since the rise of postcolonialism as a theoretical construct and field of study associated with decolonisation, new social movements have emerged, mostly as issue-oriented fronts and alliances. This panel will focus on movements, including Black Lives Matter, which has been fuelled by anti-black racism and structural inequalities rooted in slavery and capitalist systems. The Black Lives Matter movement (catalysed by the brutal killing of George Floyd in the USA,) has reverberated around the world, reviving old solidarities and triggering debates around taboo subjects such as caste-hierarchy in India, or anti-black racism in North Africa and the Middle East.
- 8:00–9:00 pm **Daght Jawi: A Live Audio-Visual Essay (2022)**
Performance by Lawrence Abu Hamdan
The Flying Saucer, Dasman

Monday, 7 March

8:30 – 9:00 am

Registration

9:00–10:00 am

Angela Davis and Manthia Diawara In Conversation

Keynote

Angela Davis (activist, scholar and author; remotely) and **Manthia Diawara** (Professor, NYU and filmmaker) Moderator: **Salah M. Hassan** (Director, The Africa Institute, Sharjah, and Distinguished Professor of Arts and Sciences, Cornell University)

10:00– 10:30 pm

Coffee break

10:30 am–12:30 pm

New Concepts and Theoretical Imperatives: Intersectionality, Feminism and Gendered Identities

Panel

Anjali Arondekar (Associate Professor, Feminist Studies and founding Co-Director, Center for South Asian Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz), **Tina Campt** (Owen F. Walker Professor, Humanities and Modern Culture and Media, Brown University and Visiting Professor, Art and Archaeology, Princeton University) and **Naminata Diabate** (Associate Professor, Comparative Literature, Cornell University and Senior Fellow, The Africa Institute, Sharjah) Moderator: **Nidhi Mahajan** (Assistant Professor, Anthropology, University of California in Santa Cruz and Inaugural Fatema Mernissi Postdoctoral Fellow in Social and Cultural Studies, The Africa Institute)

This discussion will focus on new theoretical constructs that have emerged in the aftermath of the postcolonial, or older constructs that have been shaped by it. These are exemplified by concepts such as ‘intersectionality’, ‘feminism/womanism’ as well as ‘gendered identities’, which have been revised or reintroduced in light of the impact of postcolonial studies.

12:30– 2:30 pm

Lunch

2:30– 4:30 pm

New Concepts and Theoretical Imperatives: ‘Coloniality, ‘Decoloniality’ and their Aftermath

Panel

Muriam Haleh Davis (Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of California, Santa Cruz), **Walter Mignolo** (Distinguished William H. Wannamaker Professor, Romance Studies and Professor, Literature, Duke University; remotely) and **Françoise Vergès** (Professor, Cultural Studies, The Africa Institute) Moderator: **Premesh Lal** (Professor, History, The Africa Institute and Founding Director, Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape)

Postcolonialism and its aftermath have produced new critical debates that question the accuracy and relevancy of its theoretical constructs, bringing to the fore new concepts in relation to its afterlives around the world. These debates have inspired new concepts emanating from South American and the Caribbean theorists, such as the ‘coloniality of power’, as popularised by the late sociologist Anibal Quijano; or the ‘theory of decoloniality’, as vigorously advocated by the scholar Walter Mignolo; or the critique of the ‘the over-representation of man’ as introduced by the philosopher Sylvia Wynter, in the context of the ‘coloniality of being’. Panelists will explore and critique these new ideas and constructs in relation to literary, artistic and cultural production.

4:30– 5:00 pm

Coffee break

5:00– 7:00 pm

New Forms of Extraction and Surveillance

Panel

Lawrence Abu Hamdan (artist), **CAMP** (artists; Shaina Anand in person and Ashok Sukumaran remotely), **Fouad Makki** (Associate Professor, Department of Global Development and Director, Polson Institute for Global Development, Cornell University; remotely) and **Nidhi Mahajan** (Assistant Professor, Anthropology, University of California, Santa Cruz and Inaugural Fatema Mernissi Postdoctoral Fellow, Social and Cultural Studies, The Africa Institute) Moderator: **Surafel Wondimu Abebe** (Assistant Professor, Performance Studies and Theory, The Africa Institute, Sharjah)

The last four decades have witnessed intense and varied forms of extraction exemplified by 'land grabbing', and illicit trade in natural resources and minerals, such as diamonds, coltan and uranium from the Global South. These classic forms of extractions are frequently intensified by military conflict abetted by western business and political interests. Parallel to this, new systems of surveillance have emerged, deployed by powerful nations to assert and maintain global military, economic and political dominance. These conditions often produce new (or revamped old) economic, political and cultural imaginaries and practices resistant to entrenched and emergent forms of extraction, surveillance and subjection. This panel addresses critical and artistic responses to these phenomena.

7:30 – 8:00 pm

Gerald Annan-Forson: *Revolution and Image-making in Postcolonial Ghana (1979-1985)*

Opening Reception

Al Hamriyah Studios, Al Hamriyah

Shuttle to Al Hamriyah Studios will be available from Sharjah Institute of Theatrical Arts, Al Mureijah Square, at 6:00 pm.

8:00–8:30 pm

Artist-led tour: Gerald Annan-Forson