

NIGHT GALLERY

2276 E. 16th Street, Los Angeles, California 90021

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Editors, "ESSAYS Mousse 71: POWWOW," *Mousse Magazine*, Spring 2020.

Mousse Magazine

ESSAYS Mousse 71
POWWOW

Mousse asked Studio for Propositional Cinema to come up with the name of a peer. The outcome is a chain of references, a "tip of the tongue" between successors of the same "game."

Artists: Studio for Propositional Cinema, Bea Schlingelhoff, Ramaya Tegegne, Kandis Williams, Deanna Bowen, Vincent Meessen, Agency



Studio for Propositional Cinema, *The Storytellers' Fountain*; narrated by *A Gust of Wind*, 2019; *The Storytellers' Fountain*; *Frame Tales*, 2019, *The Storytellers' Fountain: a tale told by A Gust of Wind in the low and dark rooms* installation view at Fondazione Morra Greco, Naples, 2020. Courtesy: Fondazione Morra Greco, Naples. Photo: Maurizio Esposito

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Bea Schlingelhoff, *Piece of Glass* installation view at Museum des Landes Glarus Freulerpalast, Näfels, 2019. Photo: Gunnar Meier

Removing a pane of glass from a frame reveals that ostensibly transparent viewpoints are inflected with reflections, smudges, distortions, and tints occluding vision. Through seemingly simple gestures, Bea Schlingelhoff unveils obfuscated malevolence in innocuous-seeming structures such as street names,¹ exhibition making,² and museological framing devices. For a recent exhibition with Kunsthhaus Glarus, Switzerland, Schlingelhoff removed and displaced all vitrine glass from the nearby Museum des Landes's display of artillery and military paraphernalia. Left unconcealed from the "safety" of the mediating glass, the guns, swords, and cannons no longer constituted a staged heroic image of past conflict but instead revealed the latent violence of our shared cultural history as a gun pointing back at our own heads, now. (by Studio for Propositional Cinema)

1. Schlingelhoff amended street signs near Galerie Max Mayer's Worrringerstraße gallery to include plaques in honor of the German artists Marta and Emmy Worrringer, making it, tenuously, the only street in Dusseldorf named after a female artist.

2. Schlingelhoff requests collaborating curators and gallerists to cosign a document committing to counter patriarchal biases in their positions as cultural workers.

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Ramaya Tegegne, *Our Bodies Ourselves*, 2018. Courtesy: Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich. Photo: Annik Wetter

In her work for Kunsthalle Zürich in 2017, Ramaya Tegene wrote in the introduction for her publication: “Also included is the freedom of speech and conscience—guaranteed by accepted professional practice—which is supposed to safeguard our right to express critical opinions and engage in controversial activity. The logic of the question is pretty clear. We are demanding fees as compensation for work within organizations. Fees are, by definition, payment for services. If we are then accepting payment in exchange for our services, does that mean we are serving those who pay us? If not, who are we serving and on what basis are we demanding payment (and should we be demanding payment)? Or, if so, how are we serving them (and what are we serving)?” wagesforwagesagainst.org (by Bea Schlingelhoff)

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Kandis Williams, *The Midnight Snack, Well-a, whosonever told it, that he told a- He told a dirty lie, babe. Well-a, whosonever told it, that he told a- He told a dirty lie, well-a. Well-a, whosonever told it, that he told a- He told a dirty lie, babe. Well the eagle on the dollar-quarter, He gonna rise and fly, well-a. He gonna rise and fly, sugar. He gonna rise and fly, well-a. Well the eagle on the dollar-quarter, He gonna rise and fly, well-a (Chorus) Sung by "22", Little Red, Tangle Eye, and Hard Hair, accompanied by double cutting axes, 2017.* Courtesy: the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles

READER ON the white savior

READER ON misogynoir

READER ON filicide, suicide, and free will

READER ON Black and the Silver Screen

READER ON Reparations

READER FACES OF THE COLONIZER

READER ON FETISHISM (Value, Flesh, Real, Referent)

READER ON INTERRACIALITY AND PTSD

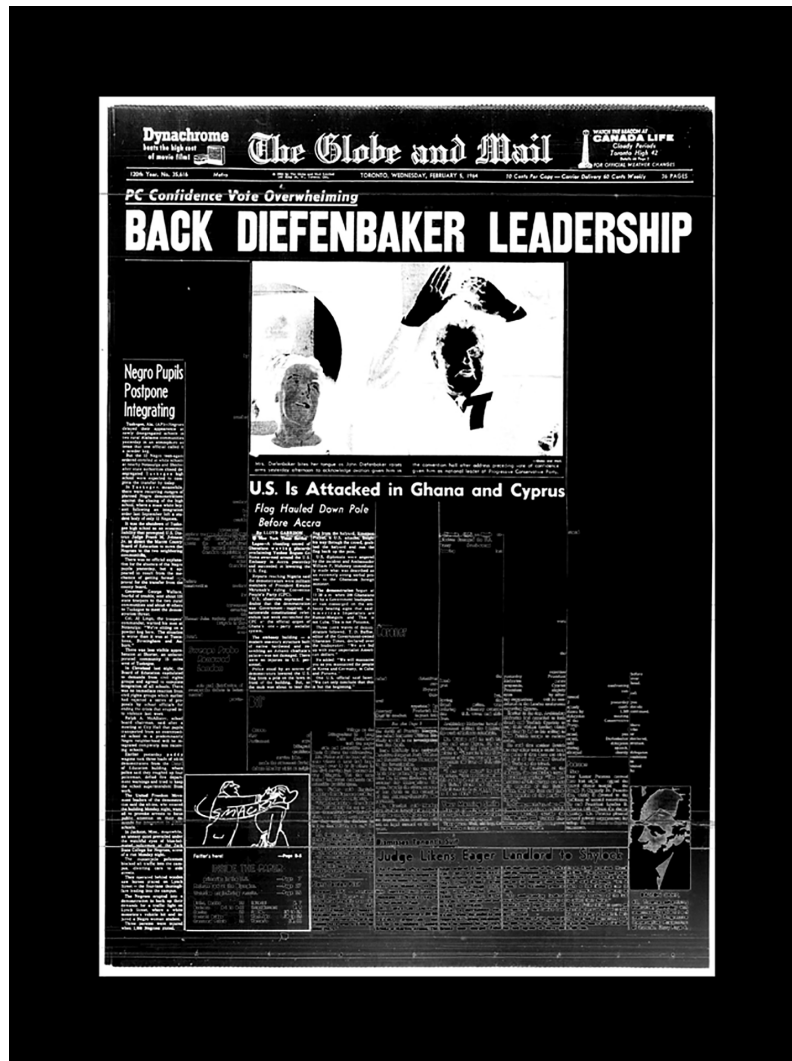
READER ON some ethics: Imperceptibility, Invisibility, Detectability, Deniability

www.cassandrapress.org (by Ramaya Tegegne)

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Deanna Bowen, *The Globe and Mail*. Wednesday February 5, 1964, p. 1, 2012.
Courtesy: the artist

Deanna Bowen mixes archive, artifact, performance, and text around affect theory and uncharted black historical and emotional space. Her work is for me really important because it's developing a frame to understand black personality, character, and sets of decisions through history without history—bringing history into intimate frames. These frames help us understand how historical encounters impact decision making on a micro level, in terms of individual and interpersonal feelings, and characters being exposed through migration and forced migration. They also speak to a macro level: how certain families develop reputations, or historical narratives that impact other, larger schemas of representation, of social interaction, of black history in progress. Her performance work deals with embodiment and enfleshment, so the problem circulates through multiple bodies in her performances. Certain problematics she directs through envisioning them, through pulling them in through other bodies for them to be rescripted, to be made contemporary.
(by Kandis Williams)

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Vincent Meessen, *Quincunx*, 2018 *Samson Kambalu and Vincent Meessen: History Without A Past* installation view at Mu.ZEE, Ostend, 2020. Photo: Steven Decroos

I first came across Vincent Meessen's work in 2015 at the 56th Venice Biennale, where he and several invited guests staged their group exhibition *Personne et les autres* in the Belgian Pavilion. It was the year Okwui Enwezor was curating, so the entire Biennale was memorable for me having the opportunity to see so many works that aligned with my political and conceptual preoccupations with history. Like Meessen, I play with real/art world power structures, and I really appreciated the ways that the pavilion upended a traditional one- or two-person show by making the collaborative turn of staging an exhibition about colonial modernity with ten artists from four continents. I'm also fond of the ways that Meessen stitches seemingly disparate forgotten or hidden histories and theory together to form narratives that better reflect the complexities of colonial legacies (as he did when he presented *Blues Klair* at Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery in Toronto in 2019). The work is not easy, but that is yet another thing I like about what he does. (by Deanna Bowen)

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Agency, *Assembly (KIOSK)*, 2018. Courtesy: KIOSK, Ghent.
Photo: Tom Callemin

Very few artists of my generation have succeeded in the tour de force of freeing themselves from visual forms in order to approach their artistic practice as the space of a critique coupled with a clinic in a radically open and collaborative manner while voluntarily keeping themselves apart from the art market. Kobe Matthys very early on wondered what would differentiate “artist critique” from the inventions by other so-called creative users. Through an attentive reading and reflection based on the “practice of everyday life” brought to light by Michel de Certeau and Luce Giard, he became interested in the tricks and resistant tactics of habits and customs and then, undoubtedly in a much more productive way in the wake of Bruno Latour, extended his research toward a critique and a clinic of copyright and author’s rights. In the age of cognitive capitalism and the omnipotence of “capture tools,” intellectual property is redrawing the contours of proprietary logics. Over the years, Matthys has built up a repertoire of legal controversies that he instructs collectively with experts and common people during assemblies. He replays past disputes, all related to what the law has, here and there, once sanctioned as being or not an “original creation.” Where and when is there a work of art? asks Agency, an artist without a so-called artwork. Agency’s cooperative practice points indeed toward the blind spot of all creation: the awareness that it too responds to laws (law, science, economics, religion, anthropology, etc.) that order the world and limit its “mad” proliferation. Agency’s assemblies are therefore to be approached as events that are both critical and clinical, celebrating the multiplicity of creation and the invention of possibilities by thinking together beyond pure legalism. To engage as a common user in a creative practice of law is to invent new operations necessary for the transformation of the world in the manner of Gilles Deleuze, who approached jurisprudence as a speculative and revolutionary tool. (by Vincent Meessen)

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Studio for Propositional Cinema was inaugurated in 2013 in Düsseldorf. Their recent exhibition at Fondazione Morra Greco in Naples offers the following guidelines: 1. Diagnose the future by extrapolating logical conclusions from the tendencies of the present. 2. Find tools dormant within the existing culture to imagine a way out of the inevitable. 3. Examine the past to find prototypes from which to begin. 4. Draw blueprints for structures that facilitate the imagination of alternate potential futures. 5. To enact the impossible makes it plausible. Assemble small groups in which such futures can be rehearsed; rehearse until the plausible feels probable. 6. Place the enactments within the culture so alternative realities appear as a home that others may desire to inhabit. 7. Use the visual to facilitate the imagination of alternate futures within the experience of the present. 8. Condense accrued information into comprehensible and replicable blueprints for the future. 9. Record and synthesize past attempts and disperse them through culture to be replicated and reimaged by others. To be repeated as necessary...

Bea Schlingelhoff often works with spatial interventions, typography, and language, sharing observations that instigate a process of interrogation of the site, conditions of art production, and the limits of the artwork. Her work has been shown, among other places, at Kunstverein Köln, Cologne (2019); Arcadia Missa, London (2019); Galerie Max Mayer, Dusseldorf (2019); Kunsthaus Glarus im Freuler Palast, Näfels (2019); Schloss, Oslo (2017); Istituto Svizzero, Milan (2017); Essex Street New York (2016); Manifesta 9, Genk (2012); New Jersey, Basel (2012); Honor Fraser, Los Angeles (2011); the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2001); and the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami (2001).

Ramaya Tegegne is an artist and cultural organizer based in Geneva. In 2017 she launched the campaign Wages For Wages Against for the remuneration of artists in Switzerland, as well as an alternative and fairer economy of the arts. She is currently co-running the art and critical bookshop La Dispersion in Geneva.

Kandis Williams (b. 1985, Baltimore) is a Los Angeles-based multimedia artist, curator, and publisher. In 2020 she will participate in the Made in L.A. Biennial, presented at the Hammer Museum and the Huntington Library in Los Angeles. She will also curate an exhibition at Night Gallery, Los Angeles, 2020. Williams has had recent solo exhibitions at Printed Matter, New York; Night Gallery, Los Angeles; Cooper Cole, Toronto; 219 Madison, Brooklyn; SADE, Los Angeles; St. Charles Projects, Baltimore; and Works on Paper, Vienna. Recent performances include Eurydice, organized by Alex Zhang Hungtai for Red Bull Music Academy at Gesu Cathedral, Montréal (2018), and A Woman's Work, organized by Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2018), as well as performances and screenings of Eurydice at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2019); Blum & Poe, Los Angeles (2018); and NAVEL LA, Los Angeles (2015). Williams has recently appeared in group exhibitions at the Frye Art Museum, Seattle; the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; the Underground Museum, Los Angeles; the Wignall Museum of Contemporary Art, Rancho Cucamonga, California; Neu West and 68 Projects, Berlin; and The Breeder, Athens, among others. Williams has an active curatorial and writing practice, and runs Cassandra Press with artists Taylor Doran and Jordan Nassar.

Deanna Bowen is descendant of two Alabama- and Kentucky-born Black Prairie pioneer families from Amber Valley and Campsie, Alberta. Bowen's family history has been the central pivot of her auto-ethnographic interdisciplinary works since the early 1990s. She uses a repertoire of artistic gestures to define the Black body and trace its presence and movement in place and time. She is a recipient of a 2020 Governor General's Award for Visual and Media Arts, a 2016 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation fellowship, and the 2014 William H. Johnson Prize. Her writing, interviews, and artworks have been published in Canadian Art; Capilano Review; Black Prairie Archives; and Transition Magazine. Bowen is editor of the publication Other Places: Reflections on Media Arts in Canada (MANO-RAMO with Public Books, 2019).

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Vincent Meessen (b. 1971, Baltimore) lives and works in Brussels. His artistic work maintains both a polemical and a sensible relation to the writing of history and the Westernization of imaginaries. He decenters and multiplies gazes and perspectives to explore the variety of ways in which colonial modernity has impacted the fabric of contemporary subjectivities. Both in his work as an artist and filmmaker and in his para-curatorial activities, he likes to use procedures of collaboration that undermine the authority of the author and emphasize the intelligence of collectives. Meessen is a member of Jubilee, a platform for artistic research and production. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions most recently at the Power Plant, Toronto (2019); Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery, Concordia University, Montréal (2018); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2018); WIELS, Brussels (2016); and MUAC, Mexico City (2014). An evolving duo show with the late Congolese painter Thela Tendu has toured to BOZAR, Brussels (2017); Kunsthalle Basel (2014); and KIOSK, Ghent (2013).

Agency is an international initiative founded in 1992 with an office in Brussels. It constitutes a growing list of “boundary things” that resist the radical split between the classifications of nature and culture. This list is mostly derived from controversies and juridical cases involving intellectual property (copyrights, patents, trademarks) from the start of the enclosures of the commons around the seventeenth century until today and from various territories of world integrated capitalism. The colonial concept of intellectual property relies upon the fundamental assumption of the split between culture and nature and consequently between expressions and ideas, creations and facts, subjects and objects, humans and nonhumans, originality and tradition, individuals and collectives, mind and body, and so on. Each controversy included in the list witnesses a resistance in terms of these divisions. Agency calls these “boundary things” forth from its list in varying “assemblies,” which combine the formats of exhibition, performance, and publication. Each assembly speculates around possible inclusions. All of Agency’s assemblies look at the operative consequences of the apparatus of intellectual property for an ecology of diverse art practices and aim at caring for practices and their singular modes of existence.

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