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Reading the image: poetics of the black diaspora : Deane Bowen, Christopher Cozier, Michael Fernandes, Maud Sulter [Exhibition Catalogue]

Fatona, Andrea and Hudson, Peter James and Walcott, Rinaldo and Kenzie, Alison

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The exhibition has been a long time in the making and has evolved collaboratively with Deanna Bowen and out of conversations with the artists, gallery directors, writers, and administrators involved. Many thanks to Deanna Bowen, Christopher Cozier, Michael Fernandes, and Maud Sulter. Many individuals and institutions have contributed to the realization of this project. I would like to thank Carl Lavoy and Andrea Duchene, Thames Art Gallery; Ingrid Jenkner, Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery; Linda Jansma, The Robert McLaughlin Gallery; Vicky Chainey-Gagnon, Foreman Art Gallery of Bishop’s University; Scott Marsden, Yukon Arts Centre; Shannon Prince, Buxton National Historic Site & Museum, Buxton, Ontario; Leah Buck, Peterborough, Ontario; Gaetane Verna, Montreal, Quebec; Joe Davies, Peterborough, Ontario; Doug Back, Melinda Mollineau, Ottawa, Ontario; and Ursula Pflug, Norwood, Ontario. Also important to the success of the exhibition are the essays written by Dr. Rinaldo Walcott and Peter Hudson. Andrea Fatona Guest Curator

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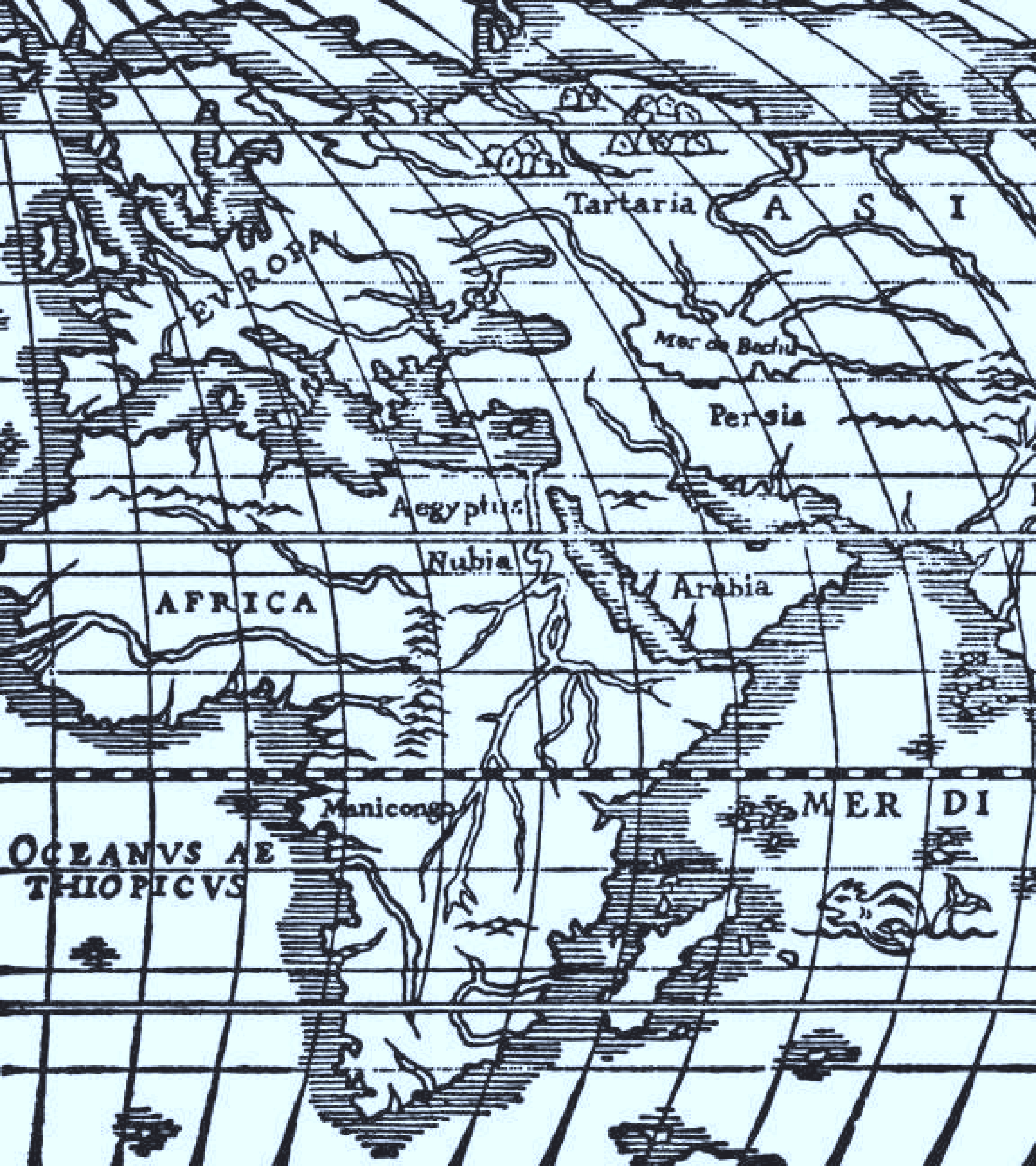
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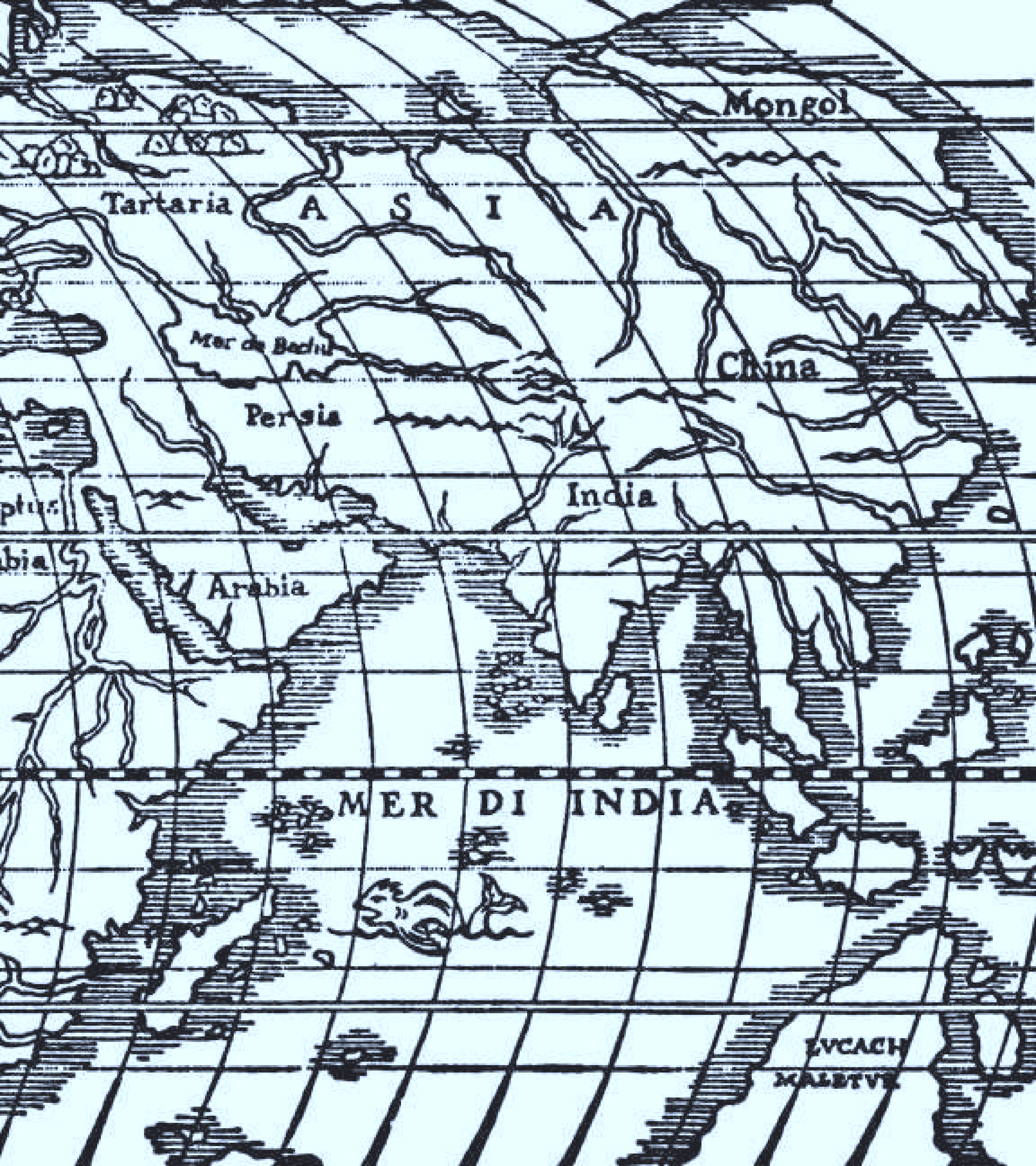
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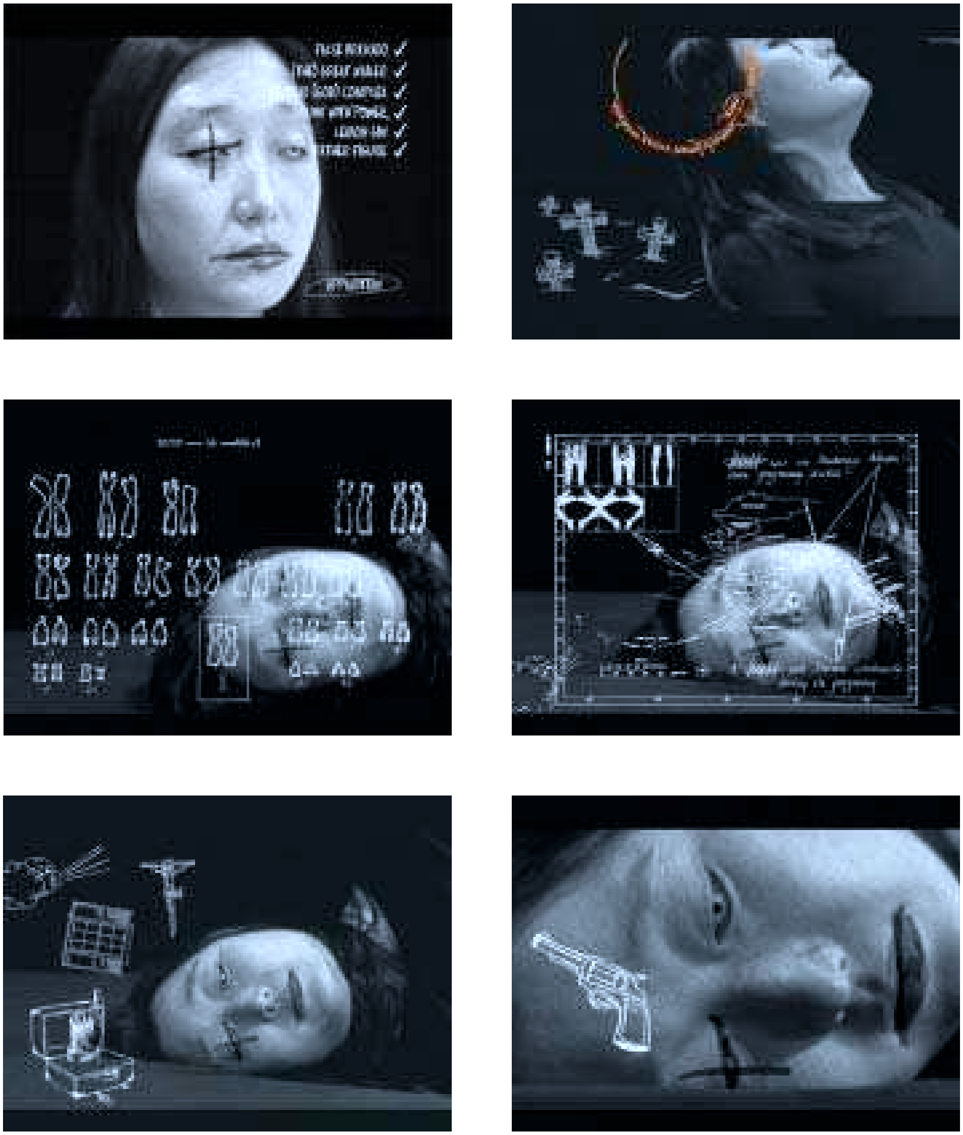
Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora

Deanna Bowen
Christopher Cozier
Michael Fernandes
Maud Sulter



Deanna Bowen; *(truth)seer* 2005 (detail); video

Connecting Across the Gaps: Experiencing the Black Diaspora

At the height of the summer of 2004, I arrived to the blistering heat, suffocating humidity, and late-afternoon tropical downpours of North Miami, and was thrown into a closely-quartered living situation with seventeen graduate students from Africa, the Americas, and Europe at Florida International University's Biscayne Bay campus. For five weeks, we lived together in FIU's air-conditioned dorms, isolated from the main campus and from Miami proper, surrounded by the Black and Hispanic workers and students composing the bulk of the population on campus and seemingly exiled from the heart of the FIU system, if not the world at large. Marooned in this outer space on the shores of the Atlantic, our group was engaged in the deliberate act of "interrogating" the African diaspora: attempting to discern the various ways in which it has been historically imagined in different cultural and political contexts.

Initially, our concerns and projects, our ways of seeing the world and living in it, often seemed as if they were in collision with one another. Yet in everyday moments — in acts of pooling financial resources, cooking together, eating together, going to the beach, engaging in intense dialogue, sharing our frustrations and elations — points of convergence and divergence in our past histories and present circumstances emerged. These moments of connectivity were generative: they sparked the development of more imaginative work amongst our community at Biscayne Bay, and helped expand the regional notions of diaspora that we had brought to Florida from our respective homes. During that summer, the concept of diaspora as a lived communion with others who are dispersed became palpable and real to me. We transformed Biscayne Bay's outer space into a central site of diaspora. Black diaspora was no longer an imagined group of people and practices; it was a self-consciously created place located, albeit provisionally, in North Miami.

The exhibition *Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora* is a gesture towards continuing the black transnational dialogues I was a part of in Biscayne Bay. Its inspiration is also derived from two additional sources. First, it emerges out of the many conversations I have had over the past two years with artist Deanna Bowen about her work and the complex ways in which the movement and migration of the black body, beginning with the slave trade, are articulated in visual artworks produced by black artists in the Anglophone world. These discussions led to a period of research and development that was jointly undertaken by Bowen and me. Out of this synergy, the exhibition took on its shape.

Secondly, following on the tropes of movement of migration at the basis of my discussions with Bowen, *Reading the Image* emerges from my desire to move the conversations on diaspora from Biscayne Bay into the context of Canada — a space generally marginalized within histories of the African diaspora, despite the long history of African presence in this country and the historic role it has played as a node in the journeys of African peoples worldwide.

Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora brings together the works of artists Deanna Bowen (Canada), Christopher Cozier (Trinidad and Tobago), Michael Fernandes (Canada), and Maud Sulter (Scotland). The exhibition is comprised of photography, video, and installation works. While the works are not aesthetically linked, the artists represent common issues, and the medium each artist employs allows for self-conscious expressions of embodiment, subjectivity, and agency. The contributors explore questions not only of diasporic movement, but also of the role of African people in, and their relationship to, modernity and its incessant march of progress, of the history of Christianity and the church as a social institution in the black world, of trauma and self-making, of community and racial formation, and of the relationship of systems of representation to colonial and postcolonial histories. The exhibition is premised on the idea that diaspora and its creative manifestations are very much about the doing and creating of spaces in which the starting point for conversation positions the contemporary black diasporic subject squarely at the centre of every utterance while incorporating varied articulations of the conditions of black diaspora. The artworks represent a range of aesthetics and worldviews that express, reflect, and retell stories of modernity from the perspective of subjects. Within these stories, blackness and diaspora are posited not as essences, but as social constructs that are dependent upon geographical specificity for their meanings and articulations. At the same time, they are not bound to static interpretations of place that render black subjects as isolated and provincial.

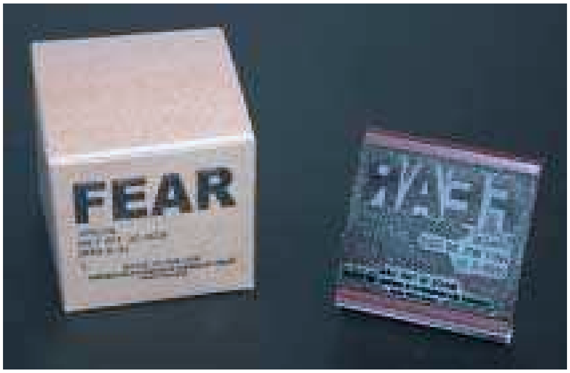
The works brought together in the exhibition highlight the importance of this geographical specificity. The ways in which geographical location and the "places" from which the artists speak, as well as from which the viewer reads, have their own syntax and internal logics in relation to the creation of meaning. Deanna Bowen's experimental video projection, *(truth)seer* (2005) utilizes the biblical story of David and Goliath to talk about struggles between opposing forces in the world. She uses this narrative to express her own narrative of trauma: specifically, her relationship to the Christian church as she has experienced it via a long line of pastors. Bowen inserts herself into the story by drawing symbols such as guns, chromosomes, and crosses over the video image. This technique interrupts the normative telling of the story and allows the viewer to extract new meanings from her symbolism. The work is a personal narrative that is extrapolated from a lengthy history of the movement of black bodies across the Atlantic to New World and the taking up of a new form of religion. It recodes the struggles to create a coherency of self within the doctrine and practices of Christianity.

Michael Fernandes' *Room of Fears* (2006) incorporates others into the process of developing the work by sending out a "call" for fears via email to a diverse range of individuals. Fernandes creates a condition in which a fleeting coming together of artist and audiences/authors is possible. The responses, which range from the whimsical to the unimaginable, are hand drawn onto black gallery walls in white chalk. On the surface this interactive call and response device used by Fernandes appears to erase him from the collective portrait, yet he remains the author of the piece. The work is participatory and allows for polyphonic voices and identities to emerge and coalesce around and identify with a category and emotion called "fear."

Christopher Cozier's multimedia installation, *Once You Have Bread and Wheels You Good To Go* (2006), consists of developmental drawings, a video projection, and loaves of bread on wheels. The installation takes up the relationship of the Caribbean — and in particular, Trinidad and Tobago's relationship to capitalist expansion — to empire building, then and now. Cozier is concerned with Caribbean modernity, and he employs white bread as a metaphor to enter into a discussion about the anxieties that the hollowed-out products of this modernity have produced within contemporary Caribbean societies. Cozier also takes up the issue of fear in his box piece called *Available in All Leading Stores* (2006). In this work Cozier alludes to the fact that fear has become an object that is packaged and sold globally. In those instances when fear is not being directly sold to consumers and citizens, it is the driving force that is used to sell the product or service, for example surveillance services and products are marketed to reduce the fear of intrusion, in other words as a form of risk reduction. Cozier invites the viewer to actively participate in constructing and consuming their own 7.5 cm square box of fear, which they can then stamp and take away.

Maud Sulter's photographic self-portraits *Les Bijoux* (2002) directly engage with the notion of the exclusion of blackness from the narratives of European modernity and place the black subject back into the centre of its processes and production. Sulter takes as her starting point her own body and the disappeared figure of Jeanne Duvall (19th-century poet Baudelaire's muse) to re-present individuals who have been erased in the annals of history. Sulter's video *My Father's House* (1997) documents the three-day funeral ceremonies held for her Ghanaian father, an eye doctor and village chief. Up until the event of his death, Sulter had had very little contact with him or his homeland of Ghana. This video, like Fernandes' *Room of Fears*, blurs the boundaries between the private and the public and re-presents a particular form of cultural hybridity — the fusion of both Fanti and Christian traditions. *My Father's House* allows the viewer a raw, intimate and sometimes uncomfortable view of an event of pomp and circumstance that most of us can only gain access through what the image and sound connote. The grainy, low-tech, home video aesthetic of the seventy-two hour funeral ritual is performed primarily in the local Ghanaian vernacular of Fanti. Sulter is a participant in the rituals and is visually present in short snippets throughout the video. In an email correspondence with the artist, Sulter explains, "They are speaking Fanti which is a branch of Twi. The point of my being 'in' the video is that I do not speak — or beyond the emotional understand — Twi. The artist is no more privileged than the common viewer, adding somewhat to the poignancy of brutal fact that, much beyond the moment of my conception, my father and I never … spent any other time together but these 72 hours."

Taken together, the aesthetic strategies employed by the artists in *Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora* illuminate the fact that black diasporic expressions are multifarious and variegated. The leitmotif in these works is a concern with authority, self-realization, agency, and the development of counter-narratives and ways of perceiving



Christopher Cozier; *Available in All Leading Stores* 2006; ink on cardboard

the past and present. The works in this exhibition blur the boundaries of national geography and identity categories, and although they critique modernity, their existence depends on the events of this period. The use of visual representation as the grounding for the dialogue brings to the surface questions about how we as viewers and makers of meaning read works produced in other locations that have their meanings constituted in other histories, narratives, idioms, and syntaxes of the present and past.

Other questions can be posed about this type of grouping of images. Does the viewer engage in different types of reading and meaning-making processes when the black body is present in the work? How does the viewer locate herself in relation to the work when the body is absent? Questions of translation also become pertinent in the context of international cultural spaces, for they are spaces in which numerous languages and visual styles come together to produce and highlight difference as communicative styles do not readily translate across their local sites. In his book, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism*, Brent Hayes Edwards aptly points out the complexities and challenges of translation when working across black international culture. He states, "Diaspora is a term that marks the ways in which internationalism is pursued by translation. This is not to say that internationalism is doomed to failure, but instead to note that it necessarily involves the process of linking or connecting across gaps."[1]

Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora is precisely about connecting across differences — national boundaries, sexualities, class, gender, ethnicities — in order to highlight the ways in which black diasporic identities and identifications emerge out of ongoing everyday negotiations of life, specificities of histories and are not defined by mythologies that gesture to an authentic place of origin. Connecting across the gaps as well as coexisting with and within the spaces of untranslatability is very much what an international and diasporic engagement is about.

It is significant that the exhibition begins its life in the Chatham-Kent region of Ontario, a region in which fugitive slaves from the United States created spaces in which they could construct, produce, and perform their personhoods. The region is a place that is shaped by and through the imaginative, creative, and very real labour of black people. Every Labour Day weekend diaspora is brought into being by the Buxton Historical Society, who hosts a Homecoming event in which descendants of the settlers of Buxton gather to commemorate freedom and the founding of the community. Over the coming years, *Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora* will tour to Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia; The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, Ontario; Foreman Art Gallery of Bishop's University, Lennoxville, Quebec; and Yukon Arts Centre, Whitehorse, Yukon, continuing the processes of movement, dialogue, history, community building, and the enacting of the black diaspora. This exhibition, like the residency at Biscayne Bay, serves as a nexus or crossroads through which the various discourses that shape representations of diaspora and who we are as Black diasporic subjects intersect.

Andrea Fatona, Guest Curator

Andrea Fatona is a curator who resides in Peterborough, Ontario.

Notes

1 Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Massachusetts: Harvard, 2003), 11.

Anti-Localism

Not quite the equivalent of a Frank Gehry building at Portage and Main, though arguably the biggest event since the Jets were reborn in Phoenix, Winnipeg's recent profile in London's *Frieze* magazine has placed the city, if only for a New York minute, on the global art world map. Or perhaps off the map is more accurate, since for Winnipeg, being nowhere helps. In his contribution to the *Frieze* issue, critic Robert Enright notes that Winnipeg has been shunted out of the story of planetary globalization since 1913, when the opening of the Panama Canal diverted freight traffic away from the transcontinental railway lines passing through the city. But Winnipeg's story, as Enright tells it in his elegiac evocation of the city's endemic somnambulance, is less one of continual decline than of insular and separate development. Especially when it comes to culture. Like an art-world Galapagos, Winnipeg was left to evolve in its own isolated ways. Its inhabitants were untouched by metropolitan sterilization, and left a peaceful remove from the overcrowded barracoons of cities like New York, with their thousands of self-promoting art-hacks jockeying to be the first up on the auction block of the cultural slave markets. A determined sense of local identity has developed as a result, one marked by a quasi-rustic, postmodern folksiness infused with prairie irony and organized around suitably anachronistic, community-based, artisanal production. Tim Gardner, Sarah Anne Johnson, Guy Maddin, and the now-disbanded Royal Art Lodge — staples from the Peg's scene — are probably not as well-known as, say, Pablo Picasso. Nonetheless, over the past few years they have made a name for themselves and for Winnipeg, garnering major exhibitions worldwide and finding themselves profiled in journals like *Frieze*.

But today's Winnipeg is yesterday's Havana and tomorrow's Reykjavik, Barquisimeto, or Ouagadougou. The intensification of market forces in the art world and the increasing stake of culture in the economy have generated a continual search for new sources of profit, prompting, as Vladimir Lenin wrote of another context, the division and re-division of the world by capital. The marketability of local cultures is the logical result of this intensification. Regionalism has emerged as a genre of accumulation. Places that were once cultural backwaters are now prized for their peculiarity and indigenous genius. The Frieze profile, much like the current advertising campaign of HSBC (the old imperial Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation), emphasizes the value of local knowledge in the contemporary economy of art. Local difference has become a pappyshow that only finds its validation through the golden touch of international capital. The local is valued not for its own sake, or for the sake of its inhabitants, but for the satisfaction of metropolitan desire and profit.

The notion of diaspora at the heart of *Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora* poses a counter to the fetishization of the local that has emerged within the current neo-liberal moment of contemporary art while providing a way of engaging with a radical black politics and aesthetics. In recent years, *diaspora*, meaning the dispersal of people originally from one origin, has moved from its Greek, Armenian, and Jewish roots and has become ubiquitous in discussions of a transnational African experience. Ubiquitous, yet somehow elusive: while diaspora is evoked at every turn, what exactly the term actually means is rarely discussed. The metaphorical work the term performs through its evocations is rarely determined. Diaspora, some suggest, is less about a tactical political engagement than it is about a metaphysical essence — one claiming that all black people are connected because they are, simply, black.

Against this, African-American literary historian Brent Hayes Edwards, borrowing from French cultural theorist Michel de Certeau, has usefully described diaspora as a *practice*. For Edwards, the connections across time and space that make up the diaspora do not emerge from some transcendental black unity. Instead, diaspora is continually built and re-built through an ongoing set of conversations and collaborations that bring it into being. Diaspora is formed through actors and institutions, not through a spurious blood lineage; it is always historical, always political, continually evoked and reconstituted through activity: through music, writing, art, dance — through the styles and syntaxes of everyday rite and ritual. These conversations and collaborations, more often than not occurring in the margins of mainstream history, are the practices that make up diaspora.

Maud Sulter; *Les Bijoux I-IX* 2002 (detail); polaroid photographs

Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora can also be thought of as a practice of diaspora. By gathering together four black artists from four corners of the world — Glasgow's Maud Sulter, Toronto's Deanna Bowen, Halifax's Michael Fernandes, and Port of Spain's Christopher Cozier — curator Andrea Fatona has staged a conversation about what diaspora is, while bringing the diaspora into being. Our task as viewers is to discern the conversations (or arguments) inherent in the series of juxtapositions of these four artists — four artists working in different media, four artists with wildly divergent aesthetics, four artists who do not form an already constituted school. We need to go beyond seeing each piece as an autonomous work and instead view the entire exhibit as a critical assemblage. We need to discern the intellectual and aesthetic affinities and, in some cases, discontinuities and dissimilarities, that help to evoke the space of diaspora.

* * * * *

Maud Sulter's *Les Bijoux* centres on and is inspired by the figure of Jeanne Duval, a mixed race black woman actor and prostitute who was the long-time lover of French poet Charles Baudelaire. For twenty-five years during the mid-nineteenth century, Duval and Baudelaire had a tempestuous, on-again off-again relationship. She is referred to as Baudelaire's muse, though that term seems altogether too polite and simplistic for what transpired between them. Even so, Duval is said to have inspired Baudelaire's richest writing, and she is regarded as the source of the so-called "Black Venus" cycle of Baudelaire's notorious erotic romp, *Fleurs du Mal* (1857) — a book of poems containing early, textbook cases of exoticized depictions of black women. "Languorous Asia, scorching Africa," Baudelaire writes in *La Chevelure*, "A whole world distant, vacant, nearly dead, /Lives in your depths, o forest of perfume!"

Baudelaire would complain to his friends (and to his mother) that Duval continually mistreated him, but Duval reportedly sold off her jewelry to support the syphilitic, philandering, opium-addicted poet. During one quarrel with Duval, Baudelaire, in a fit of rage, ordered his friend Gustave Courbet to erase her from the group portrait *The Painter's Studio* (1855), which Courbet was then finishing. Courbet obliged, but the shadow of Duval can still be seen in the picture, her apparitional figure appearing just beyond Baudelaire. Appropriately, one of Baudelaire's sketches, presumed to be of Duval, is titled *La femme sans nom*. And for Sulter, both Duval's erasure and her ghostly persistence represent not only Duval's marginalization within discussions of Baudelaire's life and work, but also a larger question of the erasure of black women from European art history and, more broadly, from the history of Western modernity.

While the Courbet painting provides the theoretical and historical subtext of Sulter's *Les Bijoux*, it has two other sources: the first poem of *Fleurs du Mal*'s Black Venus cycle, also titled "Les Bijoux," as well as "Jeune modèle," an image of Duval taken by Félix Nadar, the photographer who first introduced Duval to Baudelaire. In Nadar's photograph, Duval's head is slightly cocked to the left, her face is partly covered with shadow, and her long, crimped tresses — her so-called "good hair," one of the primary objects of Baudelaire's mulatta fetish — are parted in the middle. She is draped in a velvet gown, open at the neck, and her large eyes look straight into the camera, neither defiant, nor demure, hardly suggesting the smoldering ember of black love that burnt poor white Charles. In *Les Bijoux* Sulter takes the place of Duval in a series of self-portraits. She wears a velvet gown similar to Duval's, but her hair is cropped short. Her expression is somewhere between smug self-possession and faint distress, and the way she looks into the camera suggests either the knowledge of a secret bond between lovers or a defiant and proprietary rejection of the lens. Around her neck she wears, alternately, coral and jewel necklaces. These are, presumably, les bijoux of both Baudelaire's poem and Sulter's title.

Sulter deliberately repositions Duval within dominant historical narratives while critiquing the formalist history of portraiture. But she also creates an intriguing set of exchanges between her self-portraits and Baudelaire's poems. Sulter seems to be proposing a kind of slippage or overlap between erotic power and racial representation and, at the same time, between material economies and their symbolic equivalents. The physical representations of wealth — the jewels in question — which for Baudelaire initiated a blatantly racialized mode of desire, take on a symbolic aura for Sulter. Circulating between texts and across historical periods, the jewels signify material wealth and sexual desire, and represent black women as both. Meanwhile, Sulter attempts to break this process of objectification. Indeed, in one of the images Sulter clutches at the necklaces, apparently trying to pull them off her own neck; it as if the burden of their symbolic weight is forcing her to disclaim a sense of possession and propriety over her own body.

Where Sulter moves between the intimate contours of interpersonal life and the epic sweep of history, between the territories of desire and the realms of political economy, Deanna Bowen and Michael Fernandes shy away from an explicit statement on the social. At least at first glance. Neither work is immediately identifiable as black. In their contributions to *Reading the Image*, neither artist represents the black body. Yet Bowen's *(truth)seer* is a subtly-coded engagement with the black church. As a space of refuge from white racism, the church is the social and spiritual home to which we can all always return. Yet it is also an institution whose social function is conservative: the church is used to police difference within the black community, and it subordinates claims to universalism to the disciplining provenance of a monotheistic Father.

A looping, eighteen-minute video, *(truth)seer* restages the biblical allegory of David and Goliath. Bowen casts a set of Asian twins in the roles of both characters, immediately disrupting the power imbalance through which the story derives its symbolic impact while subverting any kind of biographical referentiality. Bowen directs us to another kind of reading. The triumph over tyrannical inequality that defines the David and Goliath story is rewritten through the harmonious unity of opposites of the yin and yang. Another question of difference is posed through the displacement of Bowen's own body, as black woman, with the Asian women in the video. Furthermore, there's a Sisyphean element here akin to the opening scene of James Baldwin's 1953 novel *Go Tell it on the Mountain*. Baldwin's John Grimes sweeps up a cloud of dust in his living room, only to have it fall back into place – setting up a later conflict between the individual and both the black church and the black family. Bowen's David and Goliath suggest a similar conflict and a similar fate. Where Sulter's portraits attempt to shatter the racist history of European formalism, Bowen uses video technology, especially through *(truth)seer*'s continuous loop, to suggest a continuity and repetition deferring any kind of narrative or psychological closure — raising, in the process, a question as to the role of black institutions in the history and repetition of black freedom.

Michael Fernandes' *Room of Fears* also explores an interior realm. The act of individual disclosure is translated into a kind of public testimonial that makes permeable the divide between private lives and social discourse. Fernandes "researched" *Room of Fears* by spending a month soliciting anxieties via email and through public ballot boxes. The thousands of submissions were then painstakingly scrawled on the gallery's walls. Each fear begins with the phrase "I am afraid of…" Practically every fear imaginable appears: I am afraid of my cat choking. I am afraid of friends who married. I am afraid of the vicissitudes of anthropology. I am afraid of my monster zits. I am afraid of Revenue Canada. I am afraid of getting caught. I am afraid of art that says "run from fear/fun from rear."

There is something striking in the density of the writing on the gallery walls. Its abstract and spidery cuneiforms creates a vertiginous, disquieting aesthetic apart from the literal, textual content of the fears themselves. As well, the cursive script, combined with the physical practice and labour of writing, lends the copy an almost acoustic texture. The meanings of each fear are given their own intimate and quiescent life by the artist's hand — especially against the forms of mechanical or digital inscription that dominate contemporary life. At the same time, instead of producing anxiety, *Room of Fears* evokes a sense of catharsis, largely because of its public nature. But more than this, this very public display exists somewhere between absurdity and collective mania.

Fernandes does not attempt to derive some sociological knowledge from the entries. But then, how could he? His spatialization of a blues aesthetic's call and response within the gallery makes *Room of Fears* into a collective project that runs away from whatever initial, authorial aim may have motivated him. Participants are allowed to riff on the theme and meanings of fear, bringing to the project a thousand moments of sincerity, indifference, humour, and callousness. Can we assume that fear of Michael Jackson, as one individual wrote, is really a fear? Or is it some joker's playful attempt to impose his or her personality on the project? As a wallpaper of neuroses, it is glued together by a banal irony — one whose subtext seems to be the difficulties and ambivalences of creating democratic public spheres. On the other hand, in a world where individual experience is valued above all else, the contradictory, heteroglot social space created by Fernandes replaces individual fear and private anxiety with a rare, public, almost utopian, hope.

Notions of public and private are given a different spin in Christopher Cozier's *Once You Have Bread and Wheels You Good To Go*. Here, they immersed in a sense of the political – which is not to say that Cozier's work is polemical or propagandistic. Rather, Cozier interrogates the modes of neo-colonial governance through which post-Independence Trinidad and Tobago, and by extension the rest of the global south, is regulated. *Once You Have Bread and Wheels You Good To Go* appears as a natural, if bizarre, outgrowth of Cozier's *Attack of the Sandwich Men*, an exhibit at Toronto's A Space Gallery also curated by Andrea Fatona. In *Attack of the Sandwich Men* the apparently benign sandwich stands as a symbol of a Trinidadian modernity imposed from outside: hundreds of meat and cheese white bread sandwiches, wrapped in waxed paper and stuck with toothpicks bearing tiny Trinidad and Tobago standards, appeared as an armada invading A Space.

The bread of *Attack of the Sandwich Men* returns in *Once You Have Bread and Wheels You Good To Go*, though here it represents a different aspect of modernity. The initial idea for the installation came from a chance moment where Cozier's three-year-old son placed a sketch of a loaf of bread on the frame of a broken toy truck and began pushing the hybrid car across the floor of Cozier's workspace. Meanwhile, Cozier remembered an image he had seen in a local newspaper of a government minister (who reminded him of a spy worthy of a James Bond flick) on the run from for money laundering. "I was thinking about the state as cash register," Cozier writes, "and politics was really about competing groups figuring how to get access to the cash register and its code and leaving the drawer open in favour of their respective groups … I imagined a group of men moving this cash around … I imagined the bread on wheels moving around by remote control and the power of these new processes." In the installation, viewers can steer these hybrid vehicles across a representation of an antique map of the globe on the gallery floor.

Bread, in *Once You Have Bread and Wheels You Good To Go*, takes on its vernacular meaning as money, as lucre. But instead of the multiple meanings of value and wealth suggested in Sulter's *Les Bijoux*, for Cozier, the bread signifies not only the expanding monetization of the economy, but also money's rise as the universal arbiter of cultural knowledge. Cozier's absurdly mongrel car — half bread, half machine, all money — represents the culture and political economy of the postcolonial state. The installation satirizes a postcolonial descent into the cult of the individual that has as its most repulsive efflorescence the cleptocratic nature of third world states and the aestheticization of corruption and gangsterism. Cozier provides a send up for the forms of fiscal regulation that have characterized neo-colonial power — through, for example, international debt — with the internal misproprieties of the state by a native, or *creole,* comprador class.

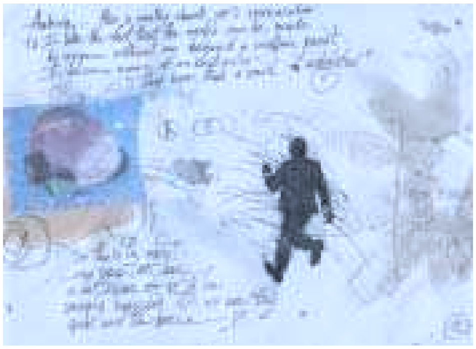
And in some ways, Cozier appears to be suggesting a universal complicity in such a fall from the edenic moment of independence. He gives us the power, via the remote control, to direct the bread on its circulatory path throughout the globe, to enact the unregulated capital flows that are a hallmark of globalization. In another sense, by handing us the control, by placing power firmly in our own hands, we become active agents, individual cartographers drawing maps different from those provided by global capital and its supplicant states, creating pathways that cut across and disrupt the course of power throughout the circuits of the world.

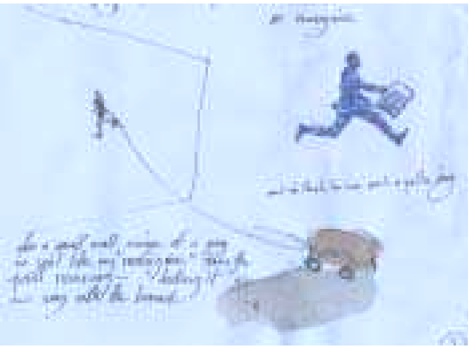
Similarly, taken together, the pieces in *Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora* offer a different kind of map: one where a handful of different locales do not have to compete with each other in a preening, entrepreneurial, and narcissistically individualistic spectacle of regionalism, one where everyday spatial practices, even if occurring under the most oppressive conditions, can be seen as an account of black survival and black resistance. This is the space of diaspora. It is also its hope.

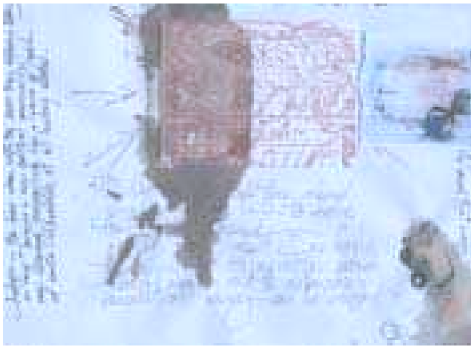
Peter James Hudson

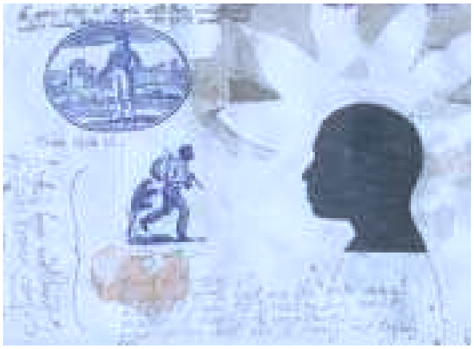
Peter James Hudson is the editor of *North: New African Canadian Writing*, a special issue of West Coast Line, and is currently completed a PhD in American Studies at New York University. He has written for *Prefix Photo* and *Transition: An International Review*.

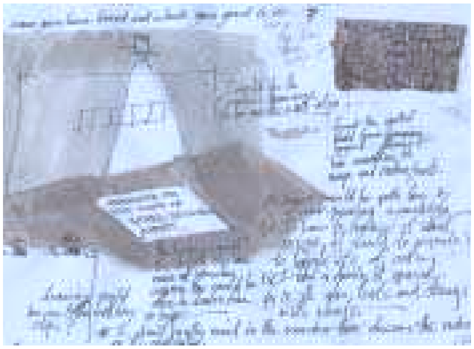
Christopher Cozier; *Once You Have Bread and Wheels You Good To Go* 2006 (detail); video, bread, plastic wheels, wood

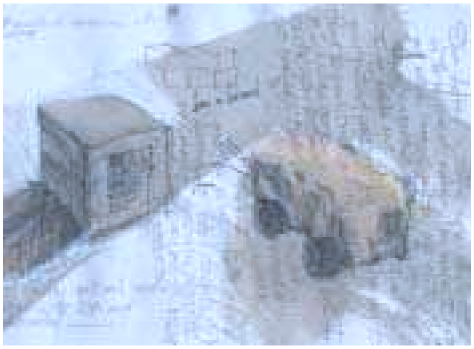


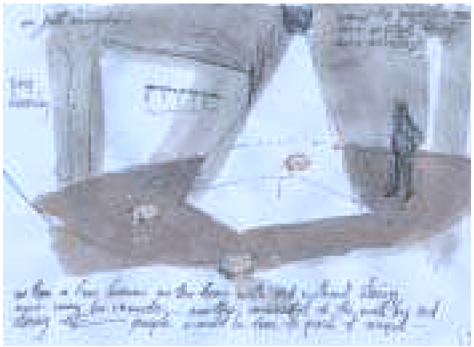


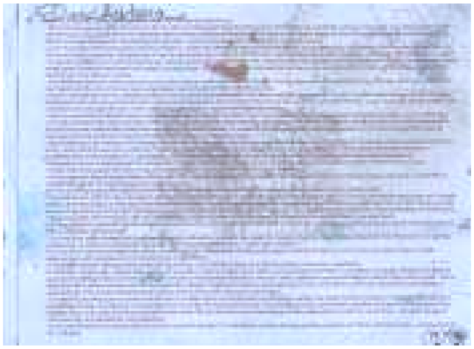












Salted Cod… : Black Canada and Diasporic Sensibilities

> "The main success of Black Art lies in its ideological commitment, in its agenda to confront, change, and humanize the prevailing (art) system so that it recognizes the equality of all people."
>
> Rasheed Araeen, 2004

Why Diaspora? Why Now?

Everybody's doing diaspora. Conferences, seminars, courses, books, special issues of journals, scholarly research centres and programs are crowding the once marginal field of diaspora studies. Museums and art galleries are there, too. Diaspora had been bequeathed to Jews, and then later to Armenians; and still later to blacks, all dispersed communities for whom any return to an ancestral homeland was irredeemably lost. Thus diaspora, which was once understood as a longed-for sentimental relationship to a lost homeland, has recently become institutionally sexy. Even my own institution has announced its Diaspora and Transnational Centre and its accompanying program. Why have ideas of diaspora made such a robust return, going beyond and sometimes even into confrontation with what was once derided as its nationalist and nostalgic history of inquiry? Why are ideas of diaspora the new lens through which to discuss dispersals of all kinds, even when all dispersals surely cannot be constituted as diaspora? What is at stake in the idea of diaspora as an analytical lens for thinking about the modern nation-state, and for thinking about ongoing regimes of colonial and imperial conditions, old and new?

Because black Canadians are generally not imagined as a constitutive element of the normative Canadian in the public sphere, and simultaneously, because the Middle Passage, slavery and the various traumatic after-effects continue to affect black peoples, black Canadians understand and make sense of themselves in relation to a much more expansive notion of blackness than national terms and conditions of identity, ethnicity and nationality tend to allow. One way to think about that expansive identity and its accompanying identifications is through the language, gesture and sensibility of diaspora. Thus notions of the black diaspora take on a particularly special quality within Canadian discourse concerning black people here. At the same time, diaspora also allows for a stance from which ethical claims concerning the inadequacies of the Canadian nation-state might be questioned, and it is that ethical stance that constitutes one of the most profound uses of diasporic sensibilities in recent returns.

What is that sensibility? A diasporic sensibility in what I will delineate here concerns the texture, gesture, form, content and indeed the underlying politics of various utterances of cultural expression. Yes, their politics. This is not an argument that all cultural production has or performs the same politics, but rather that all self-conscious diasporic expression tends to impart an explicit and implicit politics. To read for politics in cultural expression is to acknowledge Sylvia Wynter's claim that texts are not bounded and are intended to do something. Following Wynter, such an acknowledgement means that engaging cultural expression requires us to make some sense of what the work is question is intended to do, far beyond its own boundaries. Since the modern nation-state is one of the principal outcomes of the problematic of the black diasporic condition, this importantly includes a diasporic sensibility itself, one which expresses multiple and conflicting identifications within and beyond the nation-state.

At least one crucial aspect of a diasporic sensibility is dissatisfaction with the strictures and disciplines of the modern nation-state, particularly when it functions as a mechanism to challenge desires that cannot be contained within its borders. Likewise, a certain kind of dissatisfaction might delineate the insufficiency of the nation-state to quell desires for a satisfactory liberation and freedom; in other words, the unfinished project of emancipation for black people globally. Thus, diaspora is not a condition that is above or beyond the nation-state. In fact one recognizes one's place in diaspora because nation-states refuse or are incapable of living up to their promise of full citizenship for black peoples. In this way diaspora is a result of a set of forced identifications that are about a desire for reform, as much as it is about an original and violent dispersal from a once actual or imagined homeland.

Diaspora as the B-side of Globalization

Let me be clear that I believe the painful evidence of diaspora and its various discourses are the nasty B-side of what has been largely an uncritical celebration of more recent discourses on globalization. If we take competing histories of globalization and diaspora into account, we can arrive at valuable and important political distinctions. Paul Gilroy's essay, "The Sugar You Stir..." is a useful starting point. Gilroy launches an attack on raciological thinking that requires a revision of "post-anthropological codes"[1] of culture in favour of a multiculture that moves beyond "administering the lives of 'immigrants'"[2] so that globalization as a recent and new phenomenon disappears and a longer history of global circulation comes into focus. Gilroy's comments are deployed in the context of a "new" postcolonial Europe, where the spectres of a historical and global raciology continue to exist. His is an attempt to interrupt the narrative of newness and thus the containment of the racialized other in contemporary Europe. He also offers an analysis of a much longer dureé and is instructive as to how the contemporary conversation might proceed. Gilroy argues for a counter history: "At the very least it demands a comprehensive rethinking of the impact of the brutal market activity in human beings which culminated in coffee, sugar, chocolate and tea, not to mention new forms of banking, insurance and governmental administration, becoming familiar even essential elements in the common European habitus."[3] Such a counter history offers a perspective from which to think of diasporic identifications and sensibilities as exceeding and therefore complicating contemporary narratives of globalization, modernity and its multicultural compromises. Such counter histories offer a different understanding and analysis of contemporary postmodern globalization, dragging along a much older history that consistently goes missing in the current triumphant narratives.

Quite frankly, one of the unsettled issues of the newly global, multicultural, postmodern condition is STILL representation. The "old" questions of representation cannot be taken up as if those who were colonized represent innocent subjects in the technological and governmental mechanisms of global capital today. Rather, we are faced with two imperatives, cogently articulated by Gilroy. We must engage "an ethical dimension to action against racial injustice and its hierarchies"[4] and we must inquire "into an ethical, less market driven multiculturalism."[5]

I would argue that those two imperatives inform some of the ways in which the exhibition *Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora* might be experienced.

Modernity and Diaspora

Globally, black people have been the disposable populations of contemporary capitalist reordering in global relations, constituting its B-side. The B-side of the old vinyl technology of the record was not the preferred side but the side of last resort for the listener, the performer and the producer. The B-side was the throw-away or give-away song (and for this reason, I am not surprised that a black diaspora-identified art form made vinyl useful again). Thus, even though central to Western modernity, black cultures are simultaneously desired and dismissed, submerged and disappeared. However, quite often the work of art and the work of history make it reappear.

Many argue that black diasporan peoples are the templates of modernity: forged out of the twinned conditions of pain and pleasure, trauma and renewal, they offer insights pointing to the viciousness of modernity and all its unfulfilled and unfinished projects of emancipation, technological progress, and the full expression of human capacities. Black diasporan peoples stand collectively as a reminder that late global culture comes to us with a cost that continues to reverberate in numerous ways. From Africans washing up on the shores of Spain; poverty and violence in North America; to the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa, black people continue to live lives that point to modern and postmodern dissatisfaction. Hence, some celebrations of globalization ring hollow. The hollowness is not a denial of what Stuart Hall calls the unplanned migrations of the 20th and 21st centuries, which have radically changed metropolitan places, forcing new and different kinds of political questions onto the table. Rather, it points to the ways in which old and new colonialisms and imperialisms continue to render black peoples the excess of global relations in a world lived and experienced more intimately than at any time before.

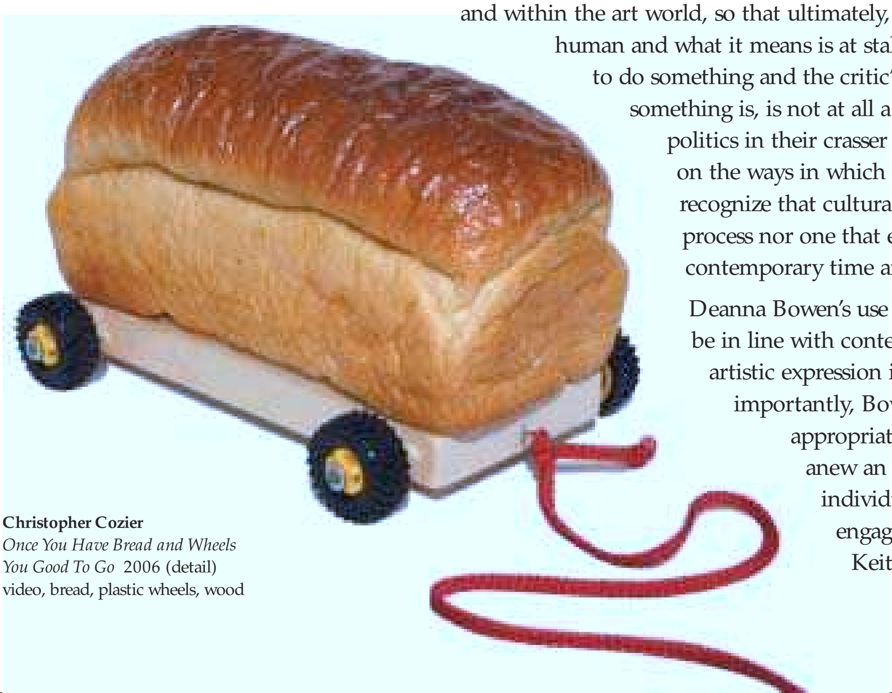
I am not suggesting there are no doubtful critiques of globalization discourses in the public sphere, but I do find it interesting to explore the ways in which a particular racial divide has developed in terms of how we discuss these conditions. White folks *talk* globalization and folks of colour and black folks *talk* diaspora. This interesting divide is one we need to pay close attention to. As we do so, it appears we once again arrive at the old politics of representation. It has been said that the politics of representation renders many of the concerns I have outlined above flat and stereotypical. Such critiques rightly point out that the desire to constitute communities of the same belies the difficult political lives we all live. This critique further suggests that communities of the same too easily open up the space for innocent and guilty locations to solidify. Such critiques call for caution — and rightly so. However, what then remains unaccounted for are the real, imagined, and psychically-shared identifications of large groups of people across geographic space. The critiques of identity politics have taught us to doubt much, but such critiques often do not allow for movement to the more difficult tasks of the ethical imperatives suggested above.

As an idea, Diaspora is not deployed as an identity but as a way of conceiving the world. Also, it becomes an analytical lens through which conditions of historical and contemporary globalizations might be read. In this sense, sensibility and gesture are more important than identity. Diasporic sensibilities make links but do not rub out locality and specificity. The movement between what I have elsewhere called the local and the outernational[6] is the methodology of a diasporic sensibility that refuses a solidification of the same at the expense of an ethical political accounting. In this regard diasporic sensibilities constantly remind us of and call into question the ideals of modernity — liberty, fraternity and progress. The art works in the exhibition *Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora* write history, rewrite history, pose questions about and offer interpretations of those ideals, challenging us to think differently about the condition of being human.

The Work of Black Art and History

The artists gathered in this exhibition use black art in conjunction with history, but they also use art to write history and what can no longer be called the unspoken. They deepen and re-animate conversations taking place both outside and within the art world, so that ultimately, we see how the question of the human and what it means is at stake. Wynter's claim that art is intended to do something and the critic's work is to decipher what the something is, is not at all a reduction of art to sociology and/or politics in their crasser sense. Wynter is instructing the critic on the ways in which the deciphering practice requires us to recognize that cultural production is neither a neutral process nor one that exists outside of its historical and contemporary time and space.

Deanna Bowen's use of video technologies might appear to be in line with contemporary uses of video to render artistic expression in a "new" genre. It is that. But most importantly, Bowen's art references the black diasporan appropriation of genre and technology to tell anew an increasingly nuanced black diasporic individual and collective trauma. Bowen's engagements with Christianity call to mind Keith Piper's installation *A Ship Called*



Christopher Cozier
Once You Have Bread and Wheels You Good To Go 2006 (detail)
video, bread, plastic wheels, wood

Jesus, which also engages the problematics of Christianity, slavery and the tribulations inherent for black people since their encounters with both systems — slavery and Christianity.

Michael Fernandes' work with fear both historicizes and extends a number of concerns that are simultaneously individual and collective, ultimately rendering the abundance of fears meaningless. The fears of modernity — or, put differently, of modernity's success — were supposed to liquidate humanity's fears by offering a reasonable and logical explanation of the world. Instead, fear has proliferated in our time. Fernandes' work is not self-consciously black, but many black folks experience modernity and particularly its technological "progress" fearfully. This fear is experienced as black folks are managed by the technological innovations of modernity — government, surveillance techniques, forms of medical knowledge, etc. Eurocentric conceptions of the world constitute the most significant and important fears for black diasporic people. In this way, then, Fernandes takes on one of the primary pillars of Euro-modernity — that such modernity has rendered the world logical, explainable and therefore knowable. The evidence suggests otherwise.

Christopher Cozier's piece takes on the ongoing disappointments of postcoloniality, black diasporic reworkings of technology and a history of movement to ironically comment on the failures of flag independence or one of modernity's greatest inventions, the nation-state. It also offers a discourse on technology — in this case, technologies of movement. The evidence of middle class routinization and its markers is transformed into the mechanisms of the push-and-pull factors of both the newer and older colonial and imperial practices that drive both planned and unplanned migrations of the contemporary moment and the simultaneous collapse of hope for liberation in an independent postcolonial nation-state.

Maud Sulter's work most directly confronts the history of art-making. The excavating practice of her photography uncovers and reclaims, but I would argue it also fundamentally repositions black people in artistic practice, and does so as a political project meant to resignify our humanity. This work reworks history, writes history, and paints the sensibilities of diasporan consciousness into being. Sulter's photographs are an elaboration and a refutation of the narrative of black peoples' exclusion from and traumatic experiences of the lively and still-living justifications of transatlantic slavery.

Taken collectively, the artists in the exhibition *Reading the Image*: *Poetics of the Black Diaspora* work across a range of concerns to excavate, re-situate and situate black people in the historical narratives of modern global culture. One of the prevailing utterances for the justification of enslaving Africans was that Africans lacked the capacity to be human because, among other qualities, they lacked the capability to make art. Art came to stand as one of the higher intelligences in the racialogy of the colonial globe, and it became a means to rob black peoples of their humanity. For at least five hundred years, then, black diasporan peoples in particular have waged a war on art as one of the sites wherein our de-humanization has taken place. However, the artists in this exhibition work with such concerns in ways that are not easily evident or easily unravelled. Working with technologies of all kinds and making those technologies speak about black humanity and its B side universality, these artists produce black worlds that operate as more than counter-narratives and counter histories. They place on the agenda a pointed conversation about the ways in which, as Rasheed Araeen has described it, "Black Art lies in its ideological commitment, in its agenda to confront, change, and humanize the prevailing (art) system so that it recognizes the equality of all people."[7] While Araeen is writing about a very specific period that he terms "Black Art" in Britain, I think his injunctions make sense for this exhibition too, in that a diaspora-framed exhibition working across history, postcolonial disappointment, racialized otherness, fear and trauma speaks within and across black diasporan consciousness and embeds the Canadian nation-state firmly in conversations it might from time to time wiggle out of.

Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora is an assault on the hidden but deeply traversed routes of colonial, imperial, and postcolonial conditions for Canada – past and present. Thus it is fitting that this exhibition has its first showing in what should be one of the revered black spaces in Canada. The area of Chatham-Kent was and is historically home to many communities of black people and their descendants. The area, which was largely populated by African Americans escaping the Fugitive Slave Act of 1852, became home to a cross-border community of black diasporan sojourners who after the U.S. Civil War moved back and forth across the border. In most narratives, this area, which is one terminus of the Underground Railroad, has become a dominant trope of the Canadian nation-state's benevolence. But there is more to black history in the region. In her masterful study, Afua Cooper points out that:

> The Detroit River Frontier, which encapsulates the present Detroit area and the counties of Essex and Kent in Ontario, was also a centre of French habitation and hence slavery. Black slavery in the Detroit River district began when the fur trader and explorer Antoine de La Mothe Cadillac travelled to the region in 1701 (and) founded Detroit. Cadillac had brought with him several dozen slaves, both Panis and Africans, from Montreal to build a fort at Detroit for the purposes of the fur trade…These servants for life thus became part of the settlement process and development of the Detroit [R]iver district.[8]

Hence, the history of the Underground Railroad adumbrates a much longer history of black relations to the region. The attempt to make such subaltern histories a part of the public sphere conversation is the work of a critically engaged black art. This work, however, is not always straightforwardly narrative, representational, or easily referential. In fact, much of this identity-based artwork was just as easily dismissed as identity politics appeared to be. In the intervening years, what has emerged is a black art that seeks to engage in dialogue that moves across conversations and genres with the intention of raising pedagogically critical questions, as opposed to merely filling in or excavating.

This art now requires both a criticism and a history that can match its complicated manoeuvres.

Black Art, Still Diaspora

The codfish in my title might be one of the most interesting and figurative symbols of the relationship of blackness to Canadian-ness; it might in fact be the imbrication of the two. Modified though it was, when shipped to African slaves in the Caribbean, salted cod became a staple in Caribbean diets before Canadians mismanaged the fisheries and turned it into a delicacy, largely the preserve of the Caribbean middle and upper classes. I suggest then that Canada's borders of blackness extend beyond the geographic limits of the nation-state proper and should be so understood. In short, the exhibition *Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora* is concerned with the ways in which we might read for the appearances and disappearances of blackness and black peoples in the project of the Canadian nation-state globally, both historical and contemporary.

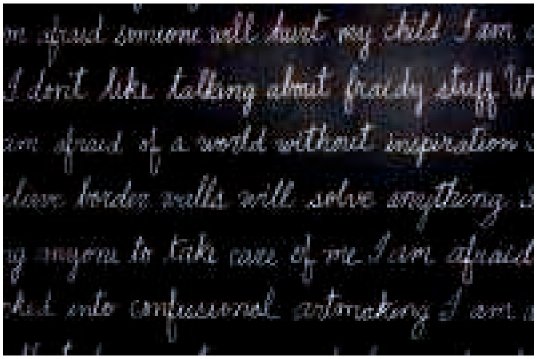
The death of the cod fishery resonates with the ways in which blackness and black people haunt the Canadian nation-state. That is, black deaths and disappearances continually return, both as an index and as a reminder of the nation-state's attempts to imagine and represent itself. Against a backdrop of whiteness a black spectre rises to haunt this narrative and call into question its legitimacy. In so doing, it continuously forces further revisions. The function of blackness here, to borrow from Kimberly W. Benston in his discussion of John Coltrane's music, is "a ghost of revision," forcing a different encounter with the notions of Canada and Canadian-ness. And I suggest this "ghost of revision" is most acutely felt in diasporic representations and sensibilities, especially because of the ways in which the haunting forces a discussion concerning blackness, a discussion which provides room for revision of this nation-state narrative, even if only for short periods of time. I am suggesting that the ingestion of salted cod by Caribbean peoples is one place that we might begin to think about the ways in which Canada occupies a central place in the lives of black peoples even before they arrive on its shores, countering narratives that would have us believe black people to be recently here. This relationship cannot be discounted, for it has an important impact on how we address and encounter blackness and black people here at home. In Mark Kurlansky's fascinating study *Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World*, the relationship between colonial Canada, transatlantic slavery and salted cod is laid bare. Within the European colonial system the Caribbean was one large plantation of export commodities like sugar, tobacco and cotton. "The Caribbean produced almost no food. At first slaves were fed salted beef from England, but New England colonies soon saw the opportunity for salt cod as cheap, salted nutrition,"[9] Kurlansky writes. He also claims, "there was little quality and they largely sold to Boston or the Caribbean. The one North American exception was the Gaspé, where a quality Gaspé cure was sold to the Mediterranean."[10] Of the contemporary situation he makes a stunning observation: "Modern Montreal is a city of both Caribbean and Mediterranean immigrants. At the

Michael Fernandes; *Room of Fears* 2006 (installation view); chalk on paint

Jean Talon market in the north of the city stores feature badly split, small dried salt cods from Nova Scotia and huge, well-prepared salt cod from Gaspé. The Caribbeans consistently buy the Nova Scotian, while the Gaspé is sold to Portuguese and Italians."[11] The work of making salted cod edible is difficult work, whether one is in Canada or the Caribbean. It is often repeated that when the first Caribbean migrants to Canada went to purchase salted cod they could not believe their eyes. The cod that they had bought back in Barbados, Jamaica or Trinidad was so thin and covered in so much salt that even the badly split cod sold in Canada was unrecognizable to them. This urban tale of Caribbean migration is obviously double-edged, drawing on the country bumpkin myth, even though Caribbean people are as cosmopolitan as any. It also points to the ways in which Caribbean and African Caribbean peoples' diets formed an important part of the historical frames of Canada's now first-world economy. They were by robbed of the better cuts of preserved cod even after emancipation from British slavery, colonialism and imperialism. Thus, the story of the cod extends Canada's "geo-body" into the Caribbean and fashions a historic link between modern Canada and the modern Caribbean. Such a link places Canada squarely in diaspora circuits.

In political economist Harold Innis' work on the Maritime Fisheries, he is almost silent on slavery. In an otherwise careful accounting of the ways in which the fisheries industry became instrumental to the formative moments of a distinctly modern Canadian economy, Innis' silence lends itself easily to the normative narrative of the nation. But it is exactly the vexed placed of black diaspora people in modernity –and more specifically, the brutal ways in which their bodies and lives were the engines that forged and moved North Atlantic industrialization — that remains an unresolved question in the Canadian nation-state.

Because the Canadian nation begins with a diminished notion of slavery (and I am being generous here), thinkers of Innis' calibre can bypass the significance of Canada's role in ship building for slavery, the cod fisheries and salted cod in particular, and all the ways that Canada's modern borders are formed by New World transatlantic trade in African bodies. Such blind spots reproduce a narrative of Canada as being only a terminus for U.S. slavery and cannot adequately account for home-grown inflections and benefits of slavery. Innis' recounting of the maritime fisheries is one moment where an articulator of Canadian uniqueness provides a wholly inadequate accounting because of an inability to grapple with one of the formative elements that give rise to the modern world. Fortunately, as Paul Gilroy has pointed out, Innis is not alone as an articulator of the modern who sees slavery as outside the boundaries of modernity. Maybe if a commentator as revered as Innis could account for Canada's benefits from slavery in his maritime studies, the cod eaten in the Caribbean as represented in the bodies of actual Caribbean and black


m afraid someone will hurt my child I am
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am afraid of a world without inspiration
lieve border walls will solve anything
g anyone to take care of me I am afraid
hed into confessional artmaking I am

Michael Fernandes; *Room of Fears* 2006 (detail); chalk on paint people would serve to constitute a firmer connection of black diasporic and Caribbean people as not merely recent arrivals but as having a long and sustained link to both colonial and contemporary Canada.

Diasporic sensibilities allow for assessing the ways in which we haunt each other's cultural terrain, while having to recognize that the haunting is not the same all around. The salted cod fishery is one of the best Canadian examples of this relation to blackness, the diaspora and modernity more generally — and of the extension of Canada's geo-body beyond its boundaries. *Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora* is an exhibition that does the work of critique. It is critique that positions Canada inside networks of global and thus diasporic problematics — not as a benefactor of recent movements, a curious observer or an exceptionalist Western interlocutor. Instead this exhibition's choice of location speaks locally and outernationally to decipher Canada's place in the global old and new colonial and imperial order that is the work of evoking diaspora at this time.

Rinaldo Walcott

Rinaldo Walcott is an Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair of Social Justice and Cultural Studies at the University of Toronto. He is a writer and cultural critic, as well as the founding editor of the on-line scholarly journal *New Dawn: The Journal of Black Canadian Studies*.

Notes

1 Paul Gilroy, "The Sugar You Stir…" In *Without Guarantees*, edited by P. Gilroy, L. Grossberg and A. McRobbie (London: Verso, 2000), 133.

2 Gilroy, 132.

3 Gilroy, 127.

4 Gilroy, 128.

5 Gilroy, 129.

6 See "Scattered Speculations on Canadian Blackness; Or, Grammar for Black" in Rinaldo Walcott's (2003) *Black Like Who?: Writing Black Canada*.

7 Rasheed Araeen, "The Success and the Failure of Black Art". *Third Text* 18, no. 2 (2004): 143.

8 Afua Copper, *The Hanging of Angélique: The Untold Story of Canadian Slavery and the Burning of Old Montreal* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2006), 74.

9 Mark Kurlansky, *Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World* (Toronto: A.A. Knopf, 1997), 80.

10 Kurlansky, 104.

11 Kurlansky, 105.

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Andrea Fatona
Guest Curator

Reading the Image: Poetics of the Black Diaspora

Participating Galleries

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Mount St Vincent Art Gallery
Halifax, Nova Scotia

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery
Oshawa, Ontario

Foreman Art Gallery of Bishop's University
Lennoxville, Quebec

Yukon Arts Centre
Whitehorse, Yukon

Coordinator .... Carl Lavoy
Guest Curator .... Andrea Fatona
Writers .... Peter James Hudson, Rinaldo Walcott
Editors .... Alison Kenzie, Ursula Pflug
Designer .... Otto Buj
Photography .... Courtesy of the artists
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List of Works

Deanna Bowen (Canada)
(truth)seer 2005
video
Collection of the artist

Christopher Cozier (Trinidad)
Available in All Leading Stores 2006
ink on cardboard
Collection of the artist

Once You Have Bread and Wheels You Good To Go 2006
video, bread, plastic wheels, wood
Collection of the artist
Video produced with the assistance of Benedict Joseph.
Installation produced in collaboration with Andrea Fatona and Doug Back.

Michael Fernandes (Canada)
Room of Fears 2006
chalk on paint
Collection of the artist

Maud Sulter (Scotland)
Les Bijoux I-IX 2002
polaroid photographs
Collection of the artist

My Father's House 1997
video
Collection of the artist

COVER **Christopher Cozier**; *Once You Have Bread and Wheels You Good To Go* 2006 (details); video, bread, plastic wheels, wood

thamesartgallery

Thames Art Gallery
Chatham Cultural Centre
75 William Street North
Chatham, Ontario N7M 4L4
www.chatham-kent.ca/tag

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MSVU art gallery

MSVU Art Gallery
Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3M 2J6
www.msvuart.ca

MSVU Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts.

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery
Civic Centre
72 Queen Street
Oshawa, Ontario L1H 3Z3
www.rmg.on.ca

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery thanks the City of Oshawa, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Ontario Arts Council for their support.

UNIVERSITÉ
BISHOP'S
UNIVERSITY

Foreman Art Gallery of Bishop's University
2600 College Street
Sherbrooke, Quebec J1M 0C8
www.ubishops.ca/artgallery

The Foreman Art Gallery of Bishop's University is supported by the Foundation of Bishop's University and the City of Sherbrooke.

YUKON
ARTS CENTRE
PUBLIC ART GALLERY

The Yukon Arts Centre
Public Art Gallery
300 College Drive
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 5X9
www.yukonartscentre.org

The Yukon Arts Centre Public Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Government of the Yukon, Tourism and Culture for its exhibition program.

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