WORKSHOP

DECOLONIAL AESTHESIS PARCOURS

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The Decolonial AestheSis Parcours is made up of exercises informed not only by recent theories around decolonial aesthetics, but by Black and African Feminist creativities, Critical Race Theories, postcolonial histories, liberal arts pedagogies, and anti-hegemonial cultural movements. The workshop invites participants to reflect on non-hierarchical relationships, embodied knowledges, creative theorisation, the African Feminist concept of theorising from the epicentres of our agency, the use of imagination as a tool of freedom and experimentation, the need for interrogation of capitalist modes of artistic production, interconnectivities, as well as the need for critical pleasure.

However, the Decolonial AestheSis Parcours is not just about play, interconnectivity, and critical pleasure, but also about the fundamental understanding that each individual carries within them the seeds of memory making, critical thinking and knowledge, archive, and creative production.

“Decolonial aestheSis” is a term coined by Argentine semiotician Walter Mignolo and the Decolonial Institute.1 “AestheSis” hints at the vast range of creative productions across the world that need to be re-evaluated, excavated, and authorised. Moreover, decolonial aestheSis, uses criticality to interrogate the fields of contemporary visual arts and art history, evidencing a politics of aesthetics and a politicisation of aesthetics, which not only questions creative production, but dissemination, reception, and knowledge-making around the fields of creativities.

Using decolonial aestheSis methodologies, the Parcours engages participants in exercises that activate participants’ embodied knowledges. Thus, the Parcours asks, with Bhekizizwe Peterson, how to refigure the archive: “How do we lock into the experiences and knowledge that have had to find sanctuary in the rituals, ceremonies, songs, literature, performances and popular culture produced by black people?”2 and to recuperate embodied knowledges that are silenced, not written, unwritten, or written out of the archive.3
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Notes
1  Mignolo and Vazquez, ‘Decolonial AestheSis’.
2  Peterson, ‘The Archives and the Political Imaginary’, 34.
3  Abrahams, ‘Ambiguity My Middle Name’.
References

